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A
MANUAL

OF

ESSAYS,

SELECTED

FROM

VARIOUS AUTHORS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME II.

ESSAY	Page
50. On Posthumous Publications— <i>Cowley's Miscellaneous Writings</i> . . .	1
51. A Word to Modern Critics— <i>Dryden's Preface to the State of Innocence</i> . . .	8
52. On the Use of Letters— <i>Lord Lyttleton's Dialogues of the Dead, Cadmus and Hercules</i>	11
53. On the Character of Poets— <i>Goldsmith's Citizen of the World</i> . . .	17
54. Confidence— <i>Collier's Essays</i> . . .	21
55. Ideal Beauty— <i>Dryden's Parallel of Poetry and Painting</i>	25
56. Advantage of Restraint, a Tale— <i>Museum for 1747, p. 128</i>	33
57. Polite Philosophy— <i>Polite Philosopher, Dodsley's Fugitive Pieces</i> . . .	39
58. Egotism— <i>The same</i>	47
59. The Society of Women the best school of Politeness— <i>The same</i> . . .	53
II.	b

ESSAY	Page
60. Homer and Virgil— <i>Dryden's Preface to the Fables</i>	61
61. Delicacy of Taste and Passion— <i>Hume's Essays</i>	65
62. Food for a Country Life— <i>Dryden's Dedication of the Georgics</i> . .	71
63. On the Immortality of the Soul— <i>Blackmore's Essays</i>	73
64. Frailty of Human Life— <i>Pope's Letters</i>	76
65. On the Advantages of Sickness— <i>The same</i>	78
66. Predominance of Good over Evil— <i>Melmoth's Cato</i>	81
67. Miscellaneous Writings— <i>Lord Shaftesbury's Miscellaneous Reflections, ch. 3</i>	87
68. Alcander and Septimius— <i>Goldsmith's Bee, Essay 3</i>	89
69. On Grace in Writing— <i>Melmoth, Fitzosborne's Letters, Letter. 29.</i> . .	96
70. On Nothing— <i>Fielding's Miscellanies, vol. 1. Essay on Nothing</i> . . .	99
71. Fashionable Diseases and Remedies— <i>Sir W. Temple's Essay on Health and Long Life</i>	106
72. Obscurity a cause of the Sublime— <i>Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful</i>	110

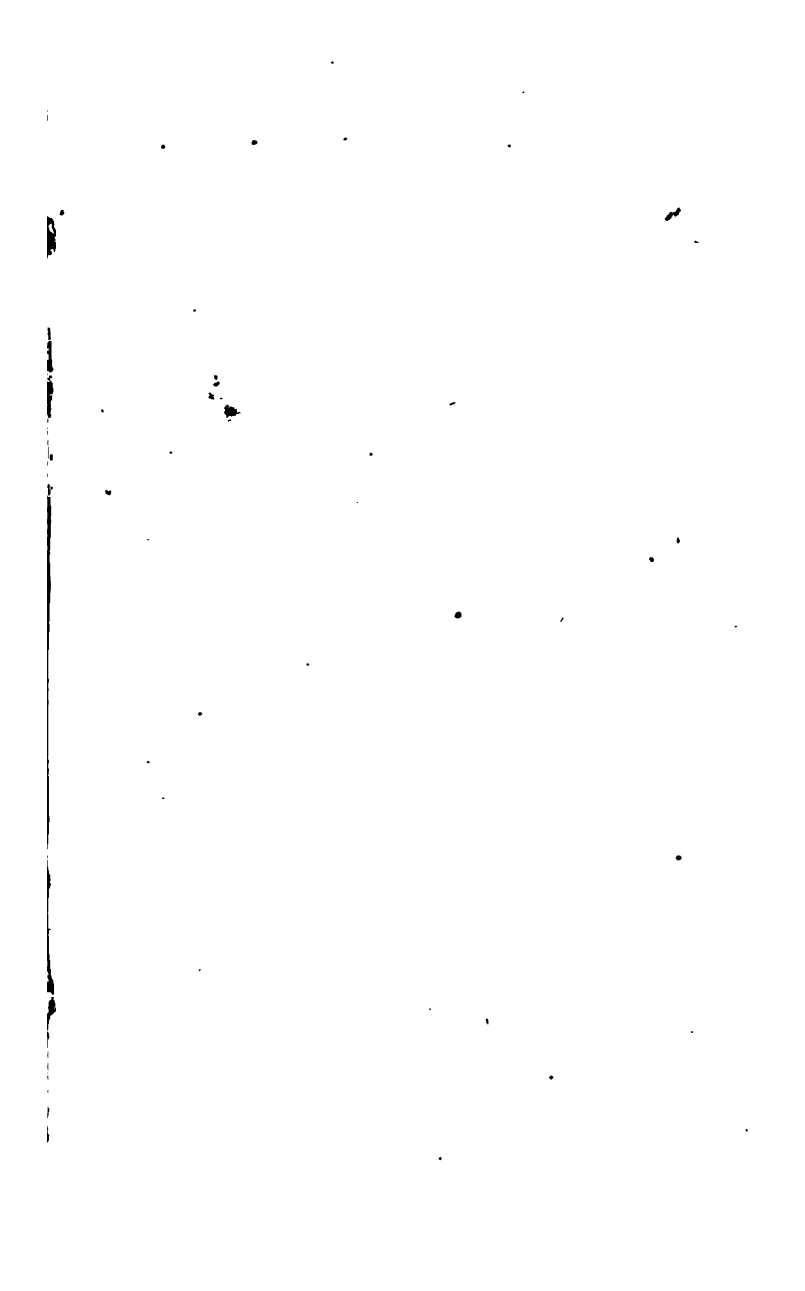
ESSAY	Page
73. Comparative Merit of the Two Sexes — <i>Melmoth, Fitzosborne's Letters,</i> <i>Letter 41.</i>	114
74. Colour and Form constituent parts of Beauty— <i>Spence. Dodsley's Fu-</i> <i>gitive Pieces</i>	119
75. Expression— <i>The same</i>	129
76. Grace— <i>The same.</i>	135
77. Character of a Republican— <i>Butler's</i> <i>Remains</i>	145
78. Evils of a Republic— <i>Dryden's Dedi-</i> <i>cation of All for Love</i>	151
79. Sentimental Comedy— <i>Goldsmith.</i>	153
80. Laziness— <i>Lord Shaftesbury's Mis-</i> <i>cellanies</i>	160
81. Affected or formal Man— <i>Butler's</i> <i>Remains</i>	163
82. Socrates— <i>Melmoth's Cato Remarks,</i> <i>p. 280.</i>	165
83. Firmness in Adversity— <i>Bolingbroke</i> <i>on Exile</i>	168
84. Weariness of Life— <i>Melmoth, Fitzos-</i> <i>borne's Letters</i>	175
85. Conversation — <i>Fielding's Miscella-</i> <i>neous Works</i>	179
86. Errors in Conversation— <i>The same</i>	191
87. The Whistle— <i>Benj. Franklin's Mis-</i> <i>cellaneous Works</i>	201
88. Gentleman and the Basket Maker— <i>Universal Spectator</i>	204

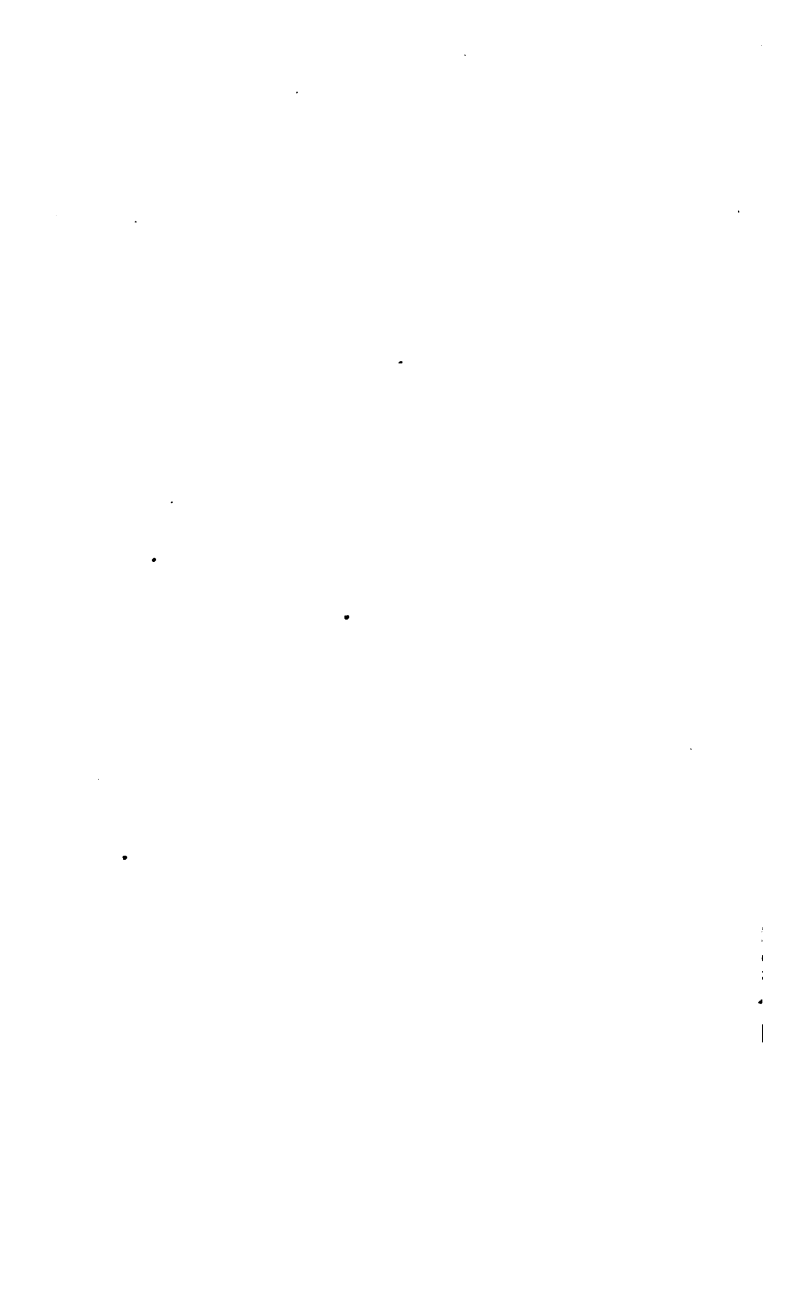


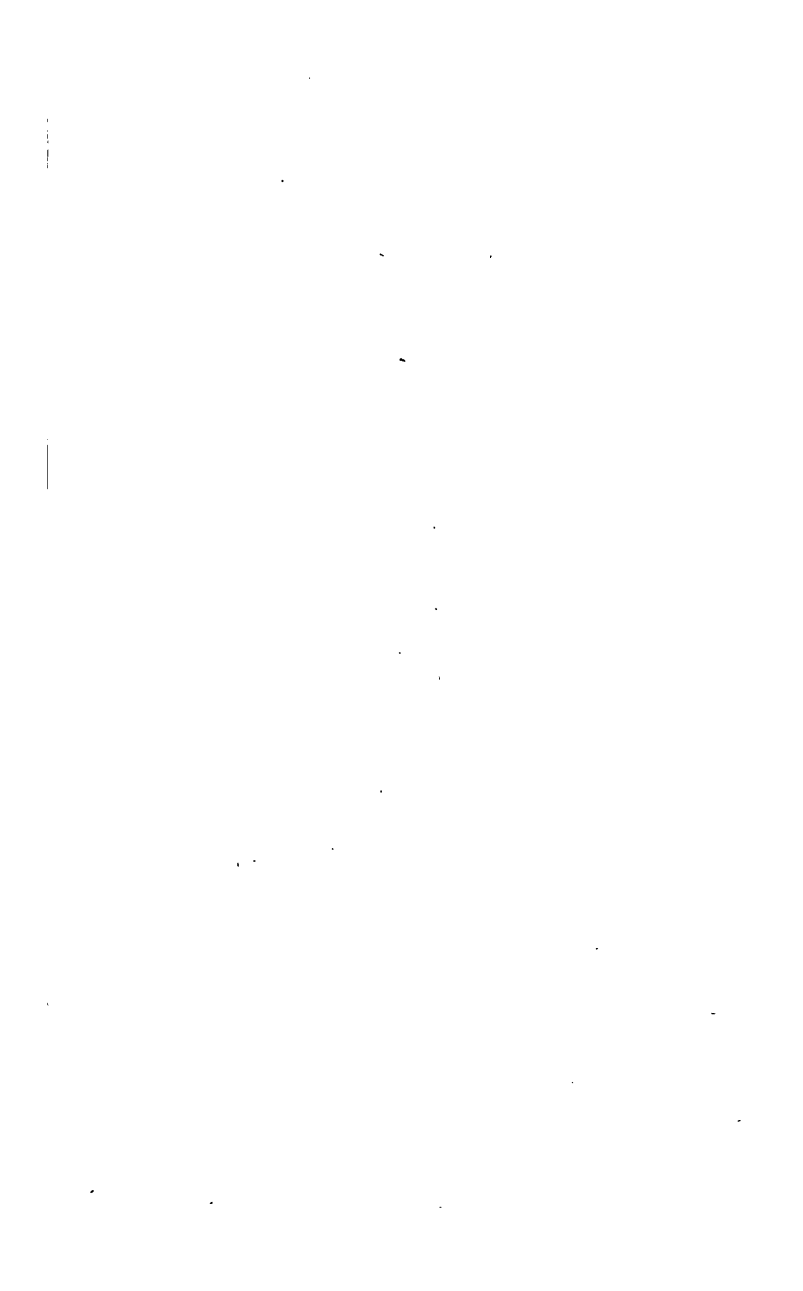
Sir Joseph Radcliffe Bart.



442
2







life. But as the marriages of infants do but rarely prosper, so no man ought to wonder at the diminution or decay of my affections to poesy, to which I had contracted myself so much under age, and so much to my own prejudice in regard to those more profitable matches, which I might have made among the richer sciences. As for the portion which this brings of fame, it is an estate (if it be any, for men are not oftener deceived in their hopes of widows, than in their opinion of "Exegi monumentum ære perennius") that hardly ever comes in, while we are living to enjoy it, but is a fantastical kind of reversion to our own selves; neither ought any man to envy poets this posthumous and imaginary happiness, since they find commonly so little in present, that it may be truly applied to them, what St. Paul speaks of the first Christians, "If their reward be in this life, they are of all men the most miserable."

And, if in quiet and flourishing times they meet with so small encouragement, what are they to expect in rough and troubled ones! If wit be such a plant, that it scarce receives heat enough to preserve it alive even in the summer of our cold climate, how can it chuse but wither in a long and sharp winter! A warlike, various, and tragical age is best to write of, but worst to write in.

Neither is the present constitution of my mind more proper than that of the times for this exercise, or rather diversion. There is nothing that requires so much serenity and cheerfulness of spirit; it must not be either overwhelmed with the cares of life, or overcast with the clouds of melancholy and sorrow, or shaken and disturbed with the storms of injurious fortune; it must, like the halcyon, have fair weather to breed in. The soul must be filled with bright and delightful ideas when it undertakes to communicate delight to others, which is the main end of poesy. One may see through the style of Ovid de Tristibus, the humbled and dejected condition of spirit with which he wrote it; there scarce remains any footstep of that genius, which produced his *Metamorphoses*, and which he concludes

*Jamque opus exegi quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignes,
Nec poterunt ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas, &c.**

The cold of the country had stricken through all his faculties, and benumbed the very feet of his verses. He is himself, methinks, one of the stones of his own *Metamorphoses*; and though there remains some weak resemblance of Ovid at Rome, it is but, as he says of Niobe,

In vultu color est sine sanguine : lumina moestis,

Stant

* I have raised a work which neither the wrath of Jove, nor fire, nor age can destroy.

Stant inimota genis : nihil est in imagine vivi.

Flet tamen—

Metam. l. vi. 304.

The truth is, to write well, it is necessary to be in good humour, neither is wit less eclipsed with the unquietness of mind, than beauty with the indisposition of body. So that it is almost as hard a thing to be a poet in despite of fortune, as it is in despite of nature. For my own part, neither my obligations to the muses, nor expectations from them, are so great, that I should suffer myself on no considerations to be divorced, or that I should say like Horace

*Quisquis erit vitæ, scribam, color.**

I shall rather use his words in another place,

Vixi Camenis nuper idoneus

Et militavi non sine gloriâ;

Nunc arma defunctumque bello

Barbiton hic paries habebit.†

Carm. l. 3. Ode 36.

and this resolution of mine does the more befit me, because my desire has been for some years

* I will continue to write, whatever may be the colour of my life.

† I was lately a follower of the muses; and fought under their banners, not without glory. Now I hang up my weapons and my harp, which are no longer useful to the war.

Cowley has applied to the muses, the expressions which Horace applies otherwise.

past, (though the execution has been accidentally diverted) and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts, which is the end of most that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat, but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy;

Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis.

Hor. 1 Ep. ii. 9.

My friends forgetting, and by them forgot.

as my former author speaks too, who has inticed me here, I do not know how, into the pedantry of this heap of Latin sentences. And I think Dr. Donne's sun-dial in a grave, is not more useless and ridiculous, than poetry would be in that retirement. As this, therefore, is in a true sense a kind of death to the muses, and a real literal quitting of this world: so methinks I may make a just claim to the undoubted privilege of deceased poets, which is, to be read with more favour than the living:

Tanti est ut placeam tibi, Perire.

Mart. l. 8. ep. 69.

ESSAY 51.

A WORD TO MODERN CRITICS.

(Dryden).

WE are fallen into an age of illiterate, censorious, and detracting people, who thus qualified set up for critics. In the first place I must take leave to tell them, that they wholly mistake the nature of criticism, who think that its business is principally to find fault. Criticism, as it was first invented by Aristotle, was meant a standard of judging well; the chiefest part of which is to observe those excellencies which should delight a reasonable reader. If the design, the conduct, the thoughts, and the expressions of a poem be generally such as proceed from a true genius of poetry, the critic ought to pass a judgment in favour of the author. It is malicious and unmanly to snarl at the little lapses of a pen, from which Virgil himself stands not exempted. Horace acknowledges that Homer

nods sometimes ; he is not equally awake in every line ; but he leaves it as a standing measure for our judgments

Ubi plura nitent in carmine, paucis
Offendi maculis, quas aut incuria fredit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura :

and Longinus, who was undoubtedly, after Aristotle, the greatest critic among the Greeks, in his twenty-seventh book on the Sublime, has judiciously preferred the sublime genius that sometimes errs, to the middling or indifferent one, which makes few faults, but seldom rises to any excellence. He compares the first to a man of large possessions, who has not leisure to consider of every slight expence, will not debase himself to the management of every trifle : particular sums are not laid out or spared to the greatest advantage in his economy, but are sometimes suffered to run to waste, while he is only careful of the main.

On the other side he likens the mediocrity of wit to one of a mean fortune, who manages his store with extreme frugality, or rather parsimony ; but who with fear of running into profuseness, never arrives to the magnificence of living. This kind of genius writes indeed correctly : a wary man he is in grammar ; very nice as to solecism and barbarism ; judges to a

hair of little decencies ; knows better than any man what is not to be written, and never hazards himself so far as to fall ; but plods on deliberately ; and as a grave man ought, is sure to put his staff before him. In short, he sets his heart upon it, and with wonderful care makes his business sure : that is, in plain English, neither to be blamed nor praised.

I could, says Longinus, find out some blemishes in Homer ; and am perhaps as naturally inclined to be disgusted at a fault as another man ; but after all, to speak impartially, his failings are such as are only marks of human frailty ; they are little mistakes, or rather negligences which have escaped his pen in the fervour of writing. The sublimity of his spirit carries it with me against his carelessness ; though Apollonius his *Argonautics*, and Theocritus his *Idyllia*, are more free from errors ; there is not any man of so false a judgment, who would chuse rather to have been Apollonius or Theocritus, than Homer.

ESSAY 52.

ON THE USE OF LETTERS.

(Lord Lyttleton.)

IF actions are to be valued by their utility and not by their splendour, Cadmus by inventing *Letters* was a greater benefactor to Greece, than Hercules by his twelve labours. Hercules indeed subdued monsters, but Cadmus civilized men. It is from untamed passions, not from wild beasts, that the greatest evils arise to human society. By wisdom, by art, by the united strength of the civil community, men have been enabled to subdue the whole race of lions, bears, and serpents; and what is more, to bind in laws and wholesome regulations, the ferocious violence and dangerous treachery of the human disposition.

The genuine glory, the proper distinction of the human species, arises from the perfection of the mental powers. Courage is apt to be fierce, and strength is often exerted in acts of oppression. But wisdom is the associate of justice: it assists

her to form equal laws, to pursue right measures, to correct power, to protect weakness, and to unite individuals in a common interest, and general welfare. Heroes may kill tyrants, but wisdom and laws prevent tyranny and oppression. The operations of policy far surpass the labours of Hercules, preventing many evils which valour and might cannot even redress. Heroes consider nothing but glory, and hardly regard whether the conquests which raise their fame are beneficial to their country. Unhappy are the people who are governed by valour, not directed by prudence, and not mitigated by the gentle arts.

An ambition to have places in the register of fame, is the Eurystheus, which imposes heroic labours on mankind. The muses excite to action, as well as entertain the hours of repose; and we should honour them for presenting to heroes such a noble recreation, as may prevent them from imitating Hercules in taking up the distaff, when they lay down the club.

To letters alone heroes owe their future existence in the memory of nations. To them the heroes of Marathon, the patriots of Thermopylæ owe their immortality. All the wise constitutions of lawgivers, and all the doctrines of sages, had perished, like a dream related, if letters had not preserved them. No hero, who prefers virtue to

pleasure, can be an enemy to the muses. Let Sardanapalus, and the silken sons of luxury, who have wasted life in inglorious ease, despise the records of action, which bear no honorable testimony to their lives. But true merit, and heroic virtue, should honour the sacred source of lasting fame.

The most important and extensive advantages which mankind enjoy, are chiefly owing to men who have never quitted their closets. To them mankind is indebted for the facility and security of navigation: the invention of the compass has opened to them a new world. The knowledge of the mechanical powers has enabled them to construct such wonderful machines, as perform what the united labours of millions could not accomplish. Agriculture too, the most useful of arts, has received its share of improvements from the same source. Poetry, likewise, is of excellent use to enable the memory to retain with more ease, and to imprint with more energy upon the heart, precepts of virtue, and noble actions. From the little root of a few letters science has spread its branches over all nature, and raised its head to the heavens. Some philosophers have entered so far into the counsels of Divine Wisdom as to explain much of the great operations of nature: the dimension and distances of the

planets, the causes of their revolutions, the path of comets, and the ebb and flow of the tides, are understood and explained,

Can any thing raise the glory of the human species more, than to see a little creature inhabiting a small spot, amidst innumerable worlds, taking a survey of the universe, comprehending its arrangement, and entering into the scheme of that wonderful connection and correspondence of things, so remote, and which it seems the utmost exertion of Omnipotence to have established? What a volume of wisdom, what noble theology, do these discoveries open to us! While some superior understandings have soared to these sublime subjects, other sagacious and diligent minds have enquired into the minutest works of the infinite Artificer: the same care, the same providence, are exerted through the whole; and we should learn from it that true wisdom, utility and fitness appear perfection, and whatever is beneficial is noble.

But if learned men are to be esteemed for the assistance which they give to active minds in their schemes, they are not less to be valued for their endeavours to give them a right direction, and moderate their too great ardor. The study of history will teach the warrior and legislator, by what means armies have been victorious, and

states have become powerful ; and in the private citizen, they will inculcate the love of liberty and order. The writings of sages point out a private path of virtue, and shew that the best empire is self-government, and to subdue our passions, the noblest of conquests.

To these observations it may be objected that the true spirit of heroism acts by a sort of inspiration, wanting neither the experience of history, nor the doctrines of philosophers, that arts and sciences render men effeminate, luxurious and inactive, and that wit and learning are often made subservient to bad purposes. To these objections the reply is obvious.

There are some natures so happily formed, that they hardly want the assistance of a master, and the rules of art, to give them force or grace in all their actions. But these heaven-inspired geniuses are but few. As learning flourishes only where ease, plenty, and mild government subsist, in so rich a soil, and under so soft a climate, the weeds of luxury will spring up among the flowers of art ; but the spontaneous weeds would grow more rank, if they were allowed the undisturbed possession of the field. Letters keep a frugal temperate nation from growing ferocious, and a rich one from becoming entirely sensual and debauched.

Every gift of the gods is sometimes abused; but wit and fine talents by a natural law gravitate towards virtue: accidents may drive them out of their proper direction; but such accidents are a sort of prodigies, and like other prodigies, it is an alarming omen, and dire portent to the times. For if virtue cannot keep to her allegiance those men, who in their hearts confess her divine right, and know the value of her laws, on whose fidelity and obedience can she depend? May such geniuses never descend to flatter vice, encourage folly, or propagate irreligion; but exert all their powers in the service of virtue, and celebrate the noble choice of those, who like Hercules, prefer her to pleasure.

ESSAY 53.

ON THE CHARACTER OF POETS.

(Goldsmith.)

I FANCY the character of a poet is in every country the same, fond of enjoying the present, careless of the future; his conversation that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool! of fortitude able to stand unmoved at the bursting of an earthquake, yet of sensibility to be affected by the breaking of a tea-cup; such is his character, which considered in every light, is the very opposite of that which leads to riches.

The poets are in general as remarkable for their indigence as for their genius; and yet among the numerous hospitals designed to relieve the poor, I have heard but of one erected for the benefit of decayed authors. This was founded by pope Urban VIII. and called The Retreat of the Incurables, intimating that it was equally impossible to reclaim the patients who sued for reception from poverty as from poetry. To be sincere,

were I to give an account of the lives of the poets, either antient or modern, I fancy I should appear to be employed in collecting materials for an history of human wretchedness.

Homer is the first poet and beggar of note among the antients; he was blind, and sung his ballads about the streets, but it is observed, that his mouth was more frequently filled with verses than with bread. Plautus the comic poet was better off; he had two trades, he was a poet for his diversion, and helped to turn a mill in order to gain a livelihood. Terence was a slave, and Boëthius died in gaol.

Among the Italians Paulo Borghese, almost as good a poet as Tasso, knew fourteen different trades, and yet died because he could get employment in none. Tasso himself, who had the most amiable character of all poets, has often been obliged to borrow a crown from some friend, in order to pay for a month's subsistence. He has left us a pretty sonnet addressed to a cat, in which he begs the light of her eyes to write by, being too poor to afford himself a candle. But Bentivoglio, poor Bentivoglio! chiefly demands our pity. His comedies will last with the Italian language; he dissipated a noble fortune in acts of charity and benevolence, but falling into misery

in his old age, was refused to be admitted into an hospital which he himself had erected.

In Spain, it is said, the great Cervantes died of hunger, and it is certain that the famous Camoens (the author of the *Lusiad*) ended his days in an hospital.

If we turn to France, we shall there find even stronger instances of the ingratitude of the public. Vaugelas, one of the politest writers, and one of the honestest men of his time, was surnamed the Owl from his being obliged to keep within all day, and venture out only by night, through fear of his creditors. His last will is very remarkable: after having bequeathed all his worldly substance to the payment of his debts, he goes on thus: But as there still may remain some creditors, unpaid even after all my property is disposed of, in such a case it is my last will, that my body should be sold to the surgeons to the best advantage; and that the purchase should help to discharge those debts which I owe to society; so that if I could not, while living, at least when dead, I may be useful.

But the sufferings of the poet in other countries is nothing when compared with his distresses here; the names of Spenser and Otway, Butler and Dryden, are daily mentioned as a national reproach; some of them lived in a state of preca-

rious indigence, and others literally died of hunger.

At present, however, the few poets in England no longer depend on the great for subsistence, they have now no other patrons but the public, and the public, collectively considered, is a good and generous master. It is indeed too frequently mistaken, as to the merits of every candidate for favour; but to make amends, it is never mistaken long. A performance may be forced for a time into reputation, but destitute of real merit it soon sinks; time, the touchstone of what is truly valuable, will soon discover the fraud, and an author should never arrogate to himself any share of success, till his works have been read at least ten years with satisfaction.

A man of letters at present, whose works are valuable, is perfectly sensible of their value. Every polite member of the community, by buying what he writes, contributes to reward him. The ridicule therefore of living in a garret, might have been wit in the last age, but continues so no longer, because no longer true. A writer of real merit now may easily be rich, if his heart be set only on fortune, and for those who have no merit, it is but fit that such should remain in merited obscurity. He may now refuse an invitation to dinner, without fearing to incur his

patron's displeasure, or to starve by remaining at home. He may now venture to appear in company with just such clothes as other men generally wear, and talk even to princes with all the conscious superiority of wisdom. Though he cannot always boast of fortune here, yet he can bravely exert the dignity of independence.

ESSAY 54.

CONFIDENCE.

(*Collier.*)

CONFIDENCE, as opposed to modesty and distinguished from decent assurance, proceeds from self-opinion, occasioned by ignorance or flattery. When a man over-rates himself, by his own folly or the knavery of others, he takes care on all occasions to do justice to his own merit. This extravagance makes him over-forward in business, assuming in conversation, sudden and peremptory in his answers, and afraid of nothing so much as to seem within the possibility of a

mistake. It is true that sometimes people who have the wit to know they are good for little, set up notwithstanding for men of sufficiency, and try if they can serve a turn upon the weakness of the company. But this trick seldom succeeds long together; for whoever wants a good opinion of himself, and is not sincere in his vanity, will be apt to want spirit and presence of mind: a diffidence of himself will betray his meanness, especially when he meets with those who are his superiors in quality or sense.

A man must first deceive himself, before he can expect to deceive others: for he that is not conceited in his conscience, is never likely to make a coxcomb worth a groat. But when the mind is thoroughly tinctured, the face will hold the same colour, and the man will be proof against all oppositions of sense and difficulty.

A man of confidence presses forward upon every appearance of advantage, and thinks nothing above his management or his merit. He is not easily discouraged by the greatness of an attempt, by the quality of rivals, or by the frequency of miscarriage. He is ready to rally after a defeat; and grows more troublesome upon a denial. Thus when his force is too feeble, he prevails by dint of impudence; thus people are stormed out of

their reason and inclination, plagued into a compliance, and forced to yield in their own defence.

These men of forehead are magnificent in their promises, and infallible in their prescriptions, and seldom talk of less than certainty and demonstration. This talent makes them often succeed against modest men of much greater sufficiency, when the competition is governed by a popular choice. For though there is reason, in many cases, to decide controversies by the vote; yet it is no less true, on the other hand, that the majority of mankind is seldom the wisest. The multitude are more smitten with appearances than things. The noise, and glitter, and parade of a pretender, calls up their attention, and irresistibly flashes upon their weakness. It surprises their imagination, and subdues their judgment; so that a bold undertaker gains greatly upon the people, especially at his first outset. Nay, wise men are sometimes overborne or imposed on in this way, when they are taken at a disadvantage.

Indeed, this faculty is of great use to gain a prize, or carry on an imposture, and therefore, quacks, astrologers, pettifoggers, and republican plotters, cannot well live without it. It enables them to flourish, rail, and romance, to admiration. It makes impertinencies shine; impossibilities seem credible, and turns rat's-bane into

elixir vitæ. And when matters are brought to a crisis, and the croud drawn out, in expectation of something extraordinary, then if the mountain will not come to Mahomet, he will for once condescend to go to the mountain. And thus by entertaining the company with a jest, the prophet is disengaged, and the miracle adjourned to a more convenient season.

However, these men meet with their mortifications; when they happen to fall among people of judgment, they are looked through immediately; and then the discovery spreads apace; for confidence is apt to expose itself by over-grasping business, talking without thinking, and failing in the decencies of conversation. Now, when a bold man is out of countenance, he makes a very ridiculous figure. He is incapable of blushing for want of practice, and acts modesty with so ill a grace, that he is more ridiculous in the habit of virtue than in that of vice.

To describe him a little further. One of this character is like a foreign curiosity, most admired at first sight. He has gloss, but without either firmness or substance, and therefore like cloth ill made, he looks better in the shop than in the suit. In a word, he is the jest of wise men, and the idol of fools, and commonly his patent runs for his life time.

ESSAY 53.

*IDEAL BEAUTY.**(Dryden.)*

GOD in the fabric of the universe, first contemplated himself, and reflected on his own excellencies; from which he drew and constituted those first forms which are called ideas; so that every species which was afterwards expressed, was produced from that first idea, forming that wonderful contexture of all-created beings. But the celestial bodies above the moon being incorruptible and not subject to change, remained for ever fair and in perpetual order. On the contrary, all things which are sublunary are subject to change, to deformity, and to decay. And though nature always intends a consummate beauty in her productions; yet through the inequality of the matter, the forms are altered; and in particular human beauty suffers alteration for the worse, as we see to our mortification, in our deformities and disproportions. For which

reason the artful painter and the sculptor, imitating the Divine Maker, form to themselves, as well as they are able, a model of the superior beauties, and reflecting on them, endeavour to correct and amend the common nature, and to represent it as it was at first created, without fault, either in colour or lineament.

This IDEA, which we may call the goddess of painting and of sculpture, descends upon the marble and the canvas, and becomes the original of those arts; and being measured by the compass of the intellect, is itself the measure of the performing hand; and being animated by the imagination, infuses life into the image. The idea of the painter and the sculptor, is undoubtedly that perfect and excellent example of the mind, by imitation of which imagined form, all things are represented, which fall under human sight; such is the definition which is made by Cicero in his book of the ORATOR to Brutus.

As therefore in forms and figures there is somewhat which is excellent and perfect, to which imagined species all things are referred by imitation, which are the objects of sight, in like manner we behold the species of eloquence in our minds, the effigies or actual images of which we seek in the organs of hearing. This is likewise confirmed by Proclus in the dialogue of Plato called

IMILLUS. "If," says he, "you take a man as he is made by nature, and compare him with another, who is the effect of art, the work of nature will always appear the less beautiful, because art is more accurate than nature."

But Zeuxis, who from the choice which he made of five virgins, drew that wonderful picture of Helena, (which Cicero, in his Orator before-mentioned, set before us as the most perfect example of beauty,) at the same time admonishes a painter to contemplate the ideas of the most natural forms, and to make a judicious choice of several bodies, all of them the most elegant which he can find. Thus we may plainly understand, that he thought it impossible to find in any one body all those perfections which he sought for in the accomplishment of a Helena, because nature in any individual person makes nothing that is perfect in all its parts.

For this reason Maximus Tyrius also says that the image which is taken by a painter from several bodies, produces a beauty which it is impossible to find in any single natural body, approaching to the perfection of the fairest statues. Thus nature on this account is so much inferior to art, that those artists who propose to themselves only the imitation and likeness of such or such particular persons, without election of

those ideas before mentioned, have often been reproached for that omission. Demetrius was taxed for being too natural: Dionysius was also blamed for drawing men like us, and was commonly called *ανδρωτόγγραφος*, that is, a painter of men. In our days, Michael Angelo da Caravaggio was esteemed too natural. He drew persons, as they were; and Bamboccio, as well as most of the Dutch painters, have drawn the worst likenesses.

Lysippus of old upbraided the common set of sculptors, for making men such as they were found in nature, and boasted of himself, that he made them as they ought to be, which is a precept of Aristotle, given as well to poets as painters. Phidias raised an admiration even to astonishment, in those who beheld his statues with the forms which he gave to his gods and heroes, by imitating the idea, rather than nature. And Cicero speaking of him, affirms that figuring Jupiter and Pallas, he did not contemplate any object from whence he took the likeness, but considered in his own mind a great and admirable form of beauty, and according to that image in his soul, he directed the operation of his hand. Seneca also seems to wonder that Phidias having never beheld either Jove or Pallas, could conceive their divine images in his mind. Apollonius Tyanæus says the same in other words, that the

fancy more instructs the painter than the imitation; for the last makes only the things which it sees, but the first makes also the things which it never sees.

Leon Battista Alberti tells us, that we ought not so much to love the likeness as the beauty, and to chuse from the fairest bodies severally the fairest parts. Leonardo da Vinci instructs the painter to form this idea to himself, and Raphael, the greatest of all modern masters, writes thus to Castiglione, concerning his *Galatea*. "To paint a fair one, it is necessary for me to see many fair ones; but because there is so great a scarcity of lovely women, I am constrained to make use of one certain idea which I have formed to myself in my own fancy." Guido Reni, sending to Rome his *St. Michael*, which he had painted for the church of the Capuchins, at the same time wrote to Monsignor Massano, who was *maestro di casa* (or steward of the house) to pope Urban the eighth, in this manner. "I wish I had the wings of an angel to have ascended into Paradise, and there to have beheld the forms of those beatified spirits, from which I might have copied my archangel. But not being able to mount so high, it was in vain for me to search his resemblance here below, so that I was forced to make an introspection into my own

“ mind, and into that idea of beauty which I
“ have formed in my own imagination.”

There was not any lady of antiquity who was mistress of so much beauty as was to be found in the Venus of Gnidus, made by Praxiteles, or the Minerva of Athens, by Phidias, which was therefore called the *beautiful form*. Neither is there any man of the present age equal in the strength, proportion, and knitting of his limbs, to the Hercules of Farnese made by Glycon; or any woman who can justly be compared with the Medicean Venus of Cleomenes. And upon this account, the noblest poets, and the best orators, when they are desired to celebrate any extraordinary beauty, are forced to have recourse to statues and pictures, and to draw their persons and faces into comparison. Ovid, endeavouring to express the beauty of Cyllarus the fairest of the Centaurs, celebrates him as next in perfection to the most admired statues.

Gratus in ore vigor, cervix, humerique, manusque,
Pectoraque artificum laudatis proxima signis.

A pleasing vigour his fair frame express'd,
His neck, his hands, his shoulders, and his breast,
Did next in gracefulness and beauty stand,
To breathing figures of the sculptor's hand.

In another place, he sets Apelles above Venus;

*Si Venerem Cous nunquam pinxisset Apelles,
Mersa sub æquereis illa lateret aquis.*

Thus varied,

One birth to seas the Cyprian goddess ow'd,
A second birth the painter's art bestow'd ;
Less by the seas than by his power was given ;
They made her live, but he advanc'd to heaven.

The idea of this beauty is indeed various, according to the several forms which the painter or sculptor would describe, as one in strength, another in magnanimity ; and sometimes it consists in cheerfulness, and sometimes in delicacy, and is always diversified by the sex and age.

The beauty of Jove is one, and that of Juno another ; Hercules and Cupid are perfect beauties, though of different kinds ; for beauty is only that which makes all things as they are in their proper and perfect nature, which the best painters always chuse by contemplating the forms of each. We ought farther to consider, that a picture being the representation of a human action, the painter ought to retain in his mind the examples of all affections and passions, as a poet preserves the idea of an angry man ; of one who is fearful, sad, or merry, and so of all the rest ; for it is impossible to express that with the hand, which never entered into the imagination.

In this manner as I have briefly and rudely shewn, painters and sculptors, chusing the most elegant natural beauties, perfectionate the idea, and advance their art even above nature itself in her individual productions, which is the utmost mastery of human performance.

From hence arises that astonishment and almost adoration, which is paid by the knowing, to those divine remains of antiquity. From hence Phidias, Lysippus, and other noble sculptors, are still held in veneration; and Apelles, Zeuxis, Protogenes, and other admirable painters, though their works are perished, are and will be eternally admired; who all of them drew after the ideas of perfection, which are the miracles of nature, the providence of the understanding, the exemplars of the mind, the light of the fancy, the sun, which from its rising inspired the statue of Memnon, and the fire which warmed into life the image of Prometheus. It is this which causes the graces and the loves to take up their habitations in the hardest marble, and to subsist in the emptiness of light and shadows.

ESSAY 56.

ADVANTAGE OF RESTRAINT.

A TALE.

(From the Museum.)

LIFE, as Cebes paints it, is a large mansion, and infancy the entrance, where ten thousand fancies and opinions of different kinds are continually waiting to allure every new comer to their respective apartments. It is the duty therefore of parents, like the good genius he describes, to inform them which of these are invested with true, and which with fallacious appearances.

But there is a defect too often in the manner used to attain this desirable end; for austerity and rigour are indiscriminately exerted toward the good and the bad, the generous and the forward; so that frequently the punishments, which are intended to drive them by force from vice, give them a disgust to virtue, which pro-

perly recommended, has charms sufficient when known, to attract the mind without any secondary motive.

In that polite age when Greece was in all her glory, there lived at Athens, a noble citizen named Democritus, whom affluence of fortune, generosity of temper, and extent of knowledge, made the delight of the poor, and an example to the rich; a benefactor to the distressed, and an ornament to his country. But amidst all the blessings power and virtue could bestow, he was suddenly rendered the most miserable of men by the death of his wife Aspasia, who dying in child-bed, left him the consolation of being father to an infant who was a living image of his deceased mother.

It was a long time before his philosophy could overcome his grief; but his passion being allayed by degrees, he resumed the man, and submitted again to the dictates of reason. His thoughts now wholly turned on the education of his son Euphemion, (for so he called the boy) whose very dawn of infancy promised the greatest splendour; but considering that the vivacity of his temper would greatly expose him to the seductions of the world, he would often, as the child sat playing on his lap, mix an anxious tear with the smiles of paternal pleasure.

When Euphemion was past his childhood, the prudent Democritus devised an expedient to make pleasure the passage to virtue, as virtue was the only passage to real pleasure; for knowing from his own past conduct, the propensity of youth to voluptuousness, he made that the enforcement of his precepts, which generally is the bane of all morality.

As they were walking together in a gallery of pictures, "Behold, my son," says the father, "that representation of perfect beauty embracing
"with no small extasy a young man who kneels
"before her." "Methinks," cries Euphemion, interrupting him, "I can read in the painting
"the greatest transport of soul; and sure he has
"sufficient reason to appear so enraptured when
"the master-piece of heaven is in his possession."
"You speak," continues Democritus, "as if you
"envied his situation, and with too much
"warmth and enthusiasm of objects that are so
"easily to be obtained, "To be obtained!" replied Euphemion; "by what means, and by
"whom! if it is in my power O tell me the way;
"it will make your son the happiest of mortals."
"Alas!" said the father sighing, "I am afraid
"the impatience of your temper will never suffer
"you to undergo the self denial and delay that is
"requisite, before you can arrive at such a height

“ of felicity.” The youth still urging his request with more vehemence than ever, Democritus then began :

“ Since you press me so earnestly to instruct
“ you in a mystery, that if observed will procure
“ you an original, equal to that representation,
“ you must be very cautious, when once you are
“ initiated, not to deviate in the least from the
“ divine institution, nor to divulge the secret ;
“ for the delinquent in such cases is always pu-
“ nished with death, by the deity to whom the
“ temple of these rites are dedicated. The story
“ then, which is never told but to those who
“ are resolved to follow the great example is this.
“ The young man you see there, was a native of
“ Cyprus, who being extremely addicted to
“ women, fell desperately in love with an ideal
“ beauty, the offspring of his own imagination.
“ As he was sitting one day by the side of a
“ fountain, sighing for the visionary object of his
“ desires, he fell asleep, and dreamed that Diana
“ descended to him from a cloud, and promised
“ him the actual enjoyment of his wishes, pro-
“ vided he would retire immediately to Ephesus,
“ and during the space of four years live in
“ chastity, and apply himself to the cultivation of
“ his mind according to the precepts of philoso-
“ phy. The vision seemed so strong to the

“ young lover, that he complied with the celestial
“ admonition, and banishing from his thoughts,
“ as soon as possible, all voluptuous desires, he
“ repaired to the place where the goddess com-
“ manded him to go.

“ At the end of four years, when he had faith-
“ fully completed the probationary state, he was
“ transported back in his sleep to the fountain
“ where he first saw the deity, and awaking sud-
“ denly, found to his no small surprise that beau-
“ tiful virgin, the reward of his labours, embrac-
“ ing him in the manner described by the artist.
“ This, my son, became afterwards a religious
“ mystery, and is (since you are acquainted with
“ its origin) the test which you must now inevi-
“ tably undergo. Divest yourself therefore for
“ a while of the affections which you have hitherto
“ contracted, and vie with the resolute Cyprian,
“ that you may participate his bliss.”

Euphemion could not help expressing some concern at so severe an injunction; however recollecting that he was only to curb his passion for the present, in order to give a greater loose to it afterwards, he resolved from that hour to begin the trial.

Accordingly at the age of seventeen, he retired from all objects that might in the least tend to divert his mind from philosophy. The first year

was spent in continual struggles between passion and reason, the second, made his solitary life somewhat more agreeable; the third afforded him real pleasure in the pursuit, exclusive of the object pursued; and the fourth completed the happy delusion, to render him by habitual study completely master of himself.

At the expiration of that time, he seemed very little solicitous about the original inducement; but recollecting some circumstance of the promised fair, he inquired of his father one day in a careless manner, when he should possess the nymph in reward for his labours.

To which Democritus replied, " My son, the
" account I gave you of the Cyprian, as you seem
" already to understand, was entirely fabulous;
" the whole picture is an ingenious allegory. I
" used this device to lead you imperceptibly into
" the path of true pleasure, and to make your life
" an explanation of those two figures. The one is
" supposed to be Happiness, the daughter of Virtue
" and Moderation; the other the emblem of hu-
" man life courting her embrace, whom she never
" fails to caress with mutual affection when con-
" ducted by her celestial parents. You expected
" only a fugitive joy as the recompence of your
" perseverance; but are now in possession of a
" permanent pleasure, one that will attend you
" through life with unchangeable felicity."

 ESSAY 57.

 POLITE PHILOSOPHY.

(Dodsley's Fugitive Pieces.)

REASON, however antique we may think it, is absolutely necessary in the composition of those who endeavour to acquire philosophical politeness; and let us receive it as a maxim, that without reason no one can be a fine gentleman. At the same time reason, like a fop's under-waistcoat, may be worn out of sight, and provided it be but worn at all, I shall not quarrel with them, though vivacity, like a laced shirt, be put on to conceal it: for, to pursue the comparison, our minds suffer no less from indiscretion, than our bodies from the injuries of the weather.

Next to this another out-of-the-way qualification must be acquired; and that is, calmness. Let not the smarts of the university, the sparks of the side boxes, or the genteel flutterers of the drawing room, imagine that I will deprive them of those elevated enjoyments of drinking tea, with

a toast, gallanting with a fair, or roving like a butterfly, through a parterre of beauties. No, I am far from being the author of such severe institutions; but am on the contrary, willing to indulge them in these pleasures, as long as they preserve their *senses*. By which I would be understood to mean, while they act in character, and suffer not a fond inclination, an aspiring vanity, or a giddy freedom, to transport them unto the doing of any thing, which may forfeit present advantages, or entail upon them future pain.

The last disposition of the soul, which I shall mention as necessary to him who would become a proficient in this science, is good-nature; a quality, which, as Mr. Dryden said in a dedication to one of the best-natured men of his time, deserves the highest esteem, though from an unaccountable depravity both of taste and morals, it meets with the least. For, can there be any thing more amiable in human nature, than to think, to speak, and to do whatever good lies in our power, to all? No man who looks upon the sun, and who feels that cheerfulness which his beams inspire, but would rather wish himself like so glorious a being, than to resemble the tiger, however formidable for its fierceness, or the serpent hated for his hissing, and dreaded for his sting. Good-nature may indeed be made almost

as diffusive as day-light, but short are the ravages of the tiger, innocent the bite of the serpent, to the vengeance of a cankered heart, or the malice of an envenomed tongue. To this let me add another argument in favour of this benevolence of soul; and farther persuasions, will, I flatter myself, be unnecessary. Good-nature adorns every perfection, and throws a veil over every blemish, which would otherwise appear. In a word, like a skilful painter, it places his virtues in the fairest light, and casts all his foibles into shade.

Thus, in a few words, sense, moderation, and good nature are essential to the polite philosopher. And if my readers think, that they cannot acquire these, let them even lay my book aside. But before they do this, let them indulge me yet a moment longer. Nature denies sense to few; moderation is in every one's power; and no man need be without good nature, who either values general esteem, or is not indifferent to public hate. For, to say truth, what is necessary to make an honest man, properly applied, would make a polite one; and as almost every one would take it amiss, if we should deny him the first appellation; so we may perceive from thence how few there are, who, but from their own indiscretion, may deserve the second. It is want

of attention, not capacity, which leaves us so many brutes ; and I flatter myself there will be fewer of this species, if any of them can be prevailed on to read this. A description of their faults is to such the fittest lecture ; for few monsters there are who can view themselves in a glass.

Our follies, when display'd, ourselves affright ;
Few are so bad, to bear the odious sight.
Mankind, in herds, thro' force of custom, stray,
Mislead each other into error's way ;
Pursue the road, forgetful of the end,
Sin by mistake, and, without thought, offend.

My readers, who have perhaps been many of them accustomed to think politeness rather an ornamental accomplishment, than necessary to be acquired in order to an easy and happy life, may from thence, pay less attention than my instructions require, unless I can convince them that they are in the wrong. For which I must remind them that the tranquillity and even felicity of our days, depends as strongly on small things, as on great ; of which men may be easily convinced, if they but reflect what great uneasiness they have experienced from cross accidents, though they related but to trifles ; and at the same time remember that disquiet is, of all others, the greatest evil, let it arise from what it will.

Now in the concerns of life, as in those of for-

tune, numbers are brought into bad circumstances from small neglects, rather than from great errors in material affairs. People are too apt to think lightly of shillings and pence, forgetful that they are constituent parts of pounds ; until the deficiency in the greater article shews their mistake, and convinces them, by fatal experience, of a truth, which they might have learned from a little attention, namely, that great sums are made up of small.

Exactly parallel to this, is that wrong notion, which many have, that nothing more is due to their neighbours, than what results from a principle of honesty, which commands us to pay our debts, and forbids us to do injuries ; whereas a thousand little civilities, complacencies, and endeavours to give others pleasure, are requisite to keep up the relish of life, and procure us that affection and esteem which all who have a sense of it, must desire. And in the right timing, and discreet management of these punctilios, consists the essence of what we call politeness.

How many know the general rules of art,
Which, unto tablets human form impart !
How many can depict the rising brow,
The nose, the mouth, and ev'ry feature shew ;
Can in their colours imitate the skin,
And by the force of fire can fix them in !

Yet when 'tis done, unpleasing to the sight ;
Tho' like, the picture strikes not with delight :
'Tis Zinck* alone gives the enamelled face
A polish'd sweetness, and a glossy grace.

As examples have greater force than precepts,
I will delineate the characters of Honorius and
Garcia, two gentlemen of my acquaintance, whose
humours I have perfectly considered, and
shall represent them without the least exaggera-
tion.

Honorius is a person equally distinguished by
his birth and fortune. He has naturally good
sense, which has been improved by a regular edu-
cation. His wit is lively, and his morals without
a stain. Is not this an amiable character? Yet
Honorius is not beloved. He has some way or
other contracted a notion, that it is beneath a
man of honour to fall below the height of truth
in any degree, or on any occasion. From this
principle he speaks bluntly what he thinks with-
out regarding the company, and from a continued
course of this sort of behaviour, has rendered
himself dreaded as a monster, instead of being
esteemed as a friend.

Garcia, on the contrary, came into the world
under the greatest disadvantage; his birth was
mean, and his fortune small.

* Christian Frederic Zinck, a native of Dresden; and
a famous painter in enamel. He died 1767.

Yet though he is scarce forty, he has acquired a handsome estate in the country, and lives on it with more reputation than most of his neighbours. While a servitor at the university, he recommended himself by his assiduities to a noble lord, and thereby procured a place of fifty pounds a year in a public office. His behaviour made him as many friends, as there were persons belonging to that board. His readiness in doing favours gained him the hearts of his inferiors; his deference for those in the highest character in the office, procured for him their good will, and the complacency he expressed towards his equals, and those immediately above him, made them espouse his interest with almost as much warmth as they did their own. By this management, in ten years time, he rose to the possession of an office, which brought him in a thousand pounds a year salary, and nearly double as much in perquisites. Affluence has made no alteration in his manners. The same easiness of disposition attends him in that fortune, to which it has raised him; and he is at this day the delight of all who know him, from an art he has of persuading them, that their pleasures and their interests are equally dear to him with his own. Who if it were in his power would refuse what Honorius possesses, and who would not

wish that possession accompanied with Garcia's disposition?

I flatter myself, that by this time most of my readers have acquired a tolerable idea of politeness, and a just notion of its use in our passage through life. I must, however, caution them of one thing, that under pretence of politeness they fall neither into a contempt, nor carelessness of science.

A man may have much learning without being a pedant; nay, it is necessary that he should have a considerable stock of knowledge before he can be polite. The gloss is never given till the work is finished: without it the best wrought piece looks clumsy; but to varnish over a rough board, is a preposterous daub. In a word, that rule of Horace, "*Miscere utile dulci*," to mix the useful and the agreeable, so often quoted, can never be better applied than in the present case, where neither of the qualities can subsist without the other.

With dress, for once, the rule of life we'll place;
Cloth is plain sense, and polish'd breeding, lace.
Men may in both mistake the true design:
Fools oft are tawdry, when they would be fine.
An equal mixture, both of use and shew,
From giddy fops, points out th' accomplish'd beau.

ESSAY 58.

*EGOTISM.**(Polite Philosopher.)*

OF all the follies into which men are apt to fall, to the disturbance of others, and lessening of themselves, there is none more intolerable than continual egotism, and a perpetual inclination to self-panegyric. The mention of this weakness is sufficient to expose it, since I think no man was ever possessed of so warm an affection for his own person, as deliberately to assert, that it and its concerns, are proper topics to entertain company. Yet there are many, who through want of attention fall into this vein; as soon as the conversation begins to acquire life, they lay hold of every opportunity of introducing themselves, of describing themselves, and if people are so dull as not to take the hint, of commending themselves. Nay, what is more surprising than all this, they are amazed at the coldness of their auditors, forgetting that there is scarce a man in the room

who has not a better opinion of himself than of any body else.

Disquisitions of this sort into human nature belong properly unto sages in polite philosophy: for the first principle of true politeness, is not to offend against such dispositions of the mind as are almost inseparable from our species. To find out, and methodise these, requires no small labour and application. The fruits of my researches on this subject I freely communicate to the public, but must at the same time, exhort my readers to spare now and then a few minutes, to such reflections, which will at least be attended with this good consequence, that it will open a scene which has novelty, that powerful charm, to recommend it. But I must beware of growing serious again, for I am afraid my gravity may have disoblged some of the beau monde already.

It cannot be expected from me, that I should particularly criticise all those foibles through which men are offensive to others in their behaviour; perhaps too, a detail of this kind however exact, might be thought tedious; it may be construed into a breach of those rules, for a strict observance of which I contend. In order therefore to diversify a subject which can no other way be treated agreeably, permit me to throw together a set of characters I once had

the opportunity of seeing, which will afford a just picture of those *Marplots* in conversation, and which my readers if they please may call the Assembly of Impertinents.

There was a coffee house in that end of the town where I lodged some time ago, at which several gentlemen used to meet in an evening, who from a happy correspondence in their humours and capacities entertained one another agreeably from the close of the afternoon, till bed time. About six months this society subsisted with great regularity though without any restraint. Every gentleman who frequented the house, and had conversed with the erectors of this occasional club, was invited to pass the evening, when he thought fit, in a room up one pair of stairs set apart for that purpose.

The report of this meeting drew, one night when I had the honour of being there, three gentlemen of distinction who were so well known to most of the members, that admittance could not be refused them. One of them, major Ramble, turned of threescore, and who had had an excellent education, seized the discourse about an hour before supper, and gave us a very copious account of the remarks which he had made in three years travels through Italy.

He began with a geographical description of the dominions of his Sardinian majesty as duke of Savoy; and after a digression on the fortifications of Turin, in speaking of which he shewed himself a perfect engineer; he proceeded to the secret history of the intrigues of that court, from the proposal of the match with Portugal to the abdication of king Victor Amadeus. After this he ran over the general history of Milan, Parma, and Modena, dwelt half an hour on the adventures of the last duke of Mantua; gave us a hasty sketch of the court of Rome, transferred himself from thence to the kingdom of Naples, repeated the insurrection of Massaniello, and a quarter before ten, finished his observations with the recital of what happened at the reduction of that kingdom to the obedience of the present emperor. * What contributed to make this conduct the more absurd, was that every gentleman in the room had been in Italy, as well as he; and one of them, a merchant, was the very person at whose house the major resided when at Naples. Possibly he might imagine the knowledge they had in those things might give them a greater relish for his animadversions, or to speak more candidly, the desire of displaying his own parts, buried every other circumstance in oblivion.

* Charles VI.

Just as the major had done speaking, a gentleman called for a glass of water; and happening to say, after drinking it, that he found his constitution much mended since he had left off malt liquor, doctor Hectic, another of the strangers, immediately laid hold of this opportunity, and gave us a large account of the virtues of water; confirming what he advanced from the works of the most celebrated physicians. From the main subject, he made an easy transition to medicinal baths and springs. Nor were his researches bounded by our own country; he condescended to acquaint us with the properties of the springs of Bourbon, particularised the genuine smell of Spa water, applauded the wonderful effects of the Pyrmont mineral, and like a true patriot wound up his disquisitions, with preferring Astrop wells (within three miles of which he was born) to them all. It was now turned of eleven; when the major and doctor took their leave, and went away together in a hackney coach.

The company seemed inclinable to extend their usual time of sitting, in order to divert themselves after the night's fatigue. When Papilio, the third new comer, after two or three severe reflections on the oddity of some people's humours, who were for imposing their own idle

conceits as things worthy the attention of a whole company; though at the same time, their subjects are trivial, and their manner of treating them insipid. For my part, continued he, gentlemen; most people do me the honour to say, that few persons understand medals better than I do. To put the musty stories of these queer old men out of our heads, I will give you the history of a valuable medallion, which was sent me about three weeks ago from Venice. Without staying for any further mark of approbation than silence, he entered immediately on a long dissertation, in which he had scarcely proceeded ten minutes, before his auditors followed the example of an old Turkey merchant, who taking up his hat and gloves, went directly down stairs without saying a word, and left the disconcerted orator to harangue the walls.

ESSAY 59.

THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN THE BEST
SCHOOL OF POLITENESS.

(*Polite Philosopher.*)

THE duke de Rochefoucault, who was esteemed the most brilliant wit in France, speaking of politeness, says, that a citizen will hardly acquire it at court, and yet may easily attain it in the camp. I shall not enter into the reason of this; but offer my readers a shorter, pleasanter, and more effectual method of arriving at the summit of genteel behaviour; that is, by conversing with the ladies.

So copious a subject as the praises of the fair, may, in the opinion of my readers, lay me under great difficulties. Every man of good understanding and fine sense, is in pain for one who has undertaken so hard a task. Hard indeed to me, who from many years' study of the sex

have discovered so many perfections in them, as scarce as many more years would afford me time to express. However not to disappoint my readers or myself, by foregoing that pleasure I feel in doing justice to the most amiable part of the creation, I will indulge the natural propensity I have to their service, and paint, though it be but in miniature, the excellencies they possess and the accomplishments which by reflection they bestow.

As when some poet, happy in his choice
Of an important subject tunes his voice
To sweeter sounds, and more exalted strains,
Which from a strong reflection he attains;
As Homer, while his heroes he records,
Transfuses all his fire into his words;
So I intent the charming sex to please,
Act with new life, and an unwonted ease;
Beyond the limits of our genius soar,
And feel an ardour quite unknown before.

Those who from wrong ideas of things, have formed themselves into a dislike of the sex, will be apt to cry out, where would this fellow run? Has he so long studied women and does he not know what numbers of affected prudes, gay coquets, and giddy impertinents there are amongst them? Alas! gentlemen, what mistakes are these? How will you be surprized, when I prove to you, that you are in the same

sentiments with me; and that you will not have so warm resentments at these peccadilloes if you did not think the ladies more than mortal.

Are the faults you would pass by in a friend and smile at in an enemy, crimes of so deep a dye as not to be forgiven? And can this flow from any other principle, than a persuasion that they are more perfect in their nature than we, and their guilt the greater therefore, in deviating, even in the smallest degree, from that perfection? Or can there be a greater honour to the sex, than this dignity which even their enemies allow them? To say truth, virtue and women owe less to their friends, than to their foes; since the vicious, in both cases, charge their own want of taste, on the weakness of human nature; pursue grosser pleasures because they are at hand; and neglect the more refined, as things of which their capacities afford them no idea.

Born with a servile gust to sensual joy,
Souls of low taste the sacred flame destroy;
By which, allied to the ethereal fire,
Celestial views the heroes thoughts inspire,
Teach him in a sublimer path to move
And urge him on to glory and to love;
Passions which only give a right to fame,
To present bliss, and to a deathless name.
While those mean wretches, with just shame o'erspread
Live on unknown—and are unheard of, dead.

Mr. Dryden, who knew human nature perhaps as well as any man who ever studied it, has given us a picture of the force of female charms, in the story of Cymon and Iphigenia. Boccaccio, from whom he took it, had adorned it with all the tinsel finery of which an Italian composition is capable. The English poet, like most English travellers, gave sterling silver in change for that superficial gilding, and bestowed a moral where he found a tale. He paints in Cymon, a soul bound in a confusion of ideas, informed with so little fire, as scarce to struggle under the load, or afford any glimmering energies of sense. In this condition he represents him struck with the rays of Iphigenia's beauty; kindled by them his mind exerts its powers; his intellectual faculties seem to awake, and that uncouth ferocity of manners, by which he had hitherto been distinguished, gave way to an obliging behaviour, the natural effect of love!

The moral of this fable is a truth, which can never be inculcated too much. It is to the fair sex we owe the most shining qualities of which ours is master; as the ancients insinuated, with their usual address, by painting both the virtues and graces as females. Men of true taste feel a natural complaisance for women when they converse with them, and fall, without knowing it

upon every art of pleasing, which is the disposition at once the most grateful to others, and the most satisfactory to ourselves. ⁶An intimate acquaintance with the other sex fixes this complaisance into a habit, and that habit is the very essence of politeness.

Nay, I presume to say politeness can be no other way attained. Books may furnish us with right ideas; experience may improve our judgments; but it is the acquaintance of the ladies only, which can bestow that ease of address, whereby the fine gentleman is distinguished from the scholar, and the man of business.

That my readers may be perfectly satisfied in a point, which I think of so great importance, let us examine this a little more strictly.

There is a certain constitutional pride in men, which hinders their yielding, in point of knowledge, honour, or virtue, to another. This immediately forsakes them at the sight of woman. And a custom of submitting to the ladies, gives a new turn to our ideas, and opens a path to reason, which she had not trod before. Things appear in another light, and that degree of complacency seems now a virtue, which heretofore we regarded as a meanness.

I have dwelt the longer on the charms of the sex, arising from the perfection visible in their

exterior composition; because there is the strongest analogy between them, and the excellencies which from a nicer enquiry, we discover in the minds of the fair. As they are distinguished from the robust make of man, by that delicacy, expressed by nature, in their form; so the severity of masculine sense is softened by a sweetness peculiar to the female soul. A native capacity of pleasing attends them through every circumstance of life; and what we improperly call the weakness of the sex, gives them a superiority unattainable by force.

The fable of the North wind and the Sun contending to make the man throw off his cloak is not an improper picture of the specific difference between the powers of either sex. The blustering fierceness of the former, instead of producing the effect at which it aimed, made the fellow but wrap himself up the closer; yet no sooner did the sunbeams play, than that which before protected, became now an incumbrance. Just so, that pride which makes us tenacious in disputes between man and man, when applied to the ladies, inspires us with an eagerness not to contend, but to obey.

To speak sincerely and philosophically, women seem designed by Providence to spread the same splendour and cheerfulness through the in-

tellectual oeconomy, that the celestial bodies diffuse over the material part of the creation. Without them, we might indeed contend, destroy, and triumph over one another. Fraud and force would divide the world between them, and we should pass our lives like slaves, in continual toil, without the prospect of pleasure or relaxation.

It is the conversation of women that gives a proper bias to our inclinations, and by abating the ferocity of our passions engages us to that gentleness of deportment which we style humanity. Our tenderness for them softens the ruggedness of our nature; and the virtues we put on to make the better figure in their eyes, keep us in humour with ourselves.

I speak it without affectation or vanity, that no man has applied more assiduously than myself to the study of the fair sex; and I aver it with the greatest simplicity of heart, that I have not only found the most engaging and most amiable, but also the most generous and most heroic qualities among the ladies; and that I have discovered more of candour, disinterestedness, and fervour in their friendships, than in those of our own sex; though I have been very careful, and particularly happy in the choice of my acquaintance.

Fram'd to give joy, the lovely sex are seen,
Beauteous their form, and heav'nly their mien.
Silent, they charm the pleas'd beholder's sight;
And speaking, strike us with a new delight:
Words when pronounc'd by them, bear each a dart;
Invade our ears, and wound us to the heart.
To no ill ends, the glorious passion sways;
By love and honour bound, the youth obeys;
Till by his service won, the grateful fair
Consents in time, to ease the lover's care;
Seals all his hopes, and in the bridal kiss,
Gives him a title to untainted bliss.

ESSAY 60.

HOMER AND VIRGIL.

(Dryden.)

IN the works of Homer and Virgil we may read their manners, and natural inclinations, which are wholly different.

Virgil was of a quiet sedate temper; Homer was violent, impetuous, and full of fire. The chief talent of Virgil was propriety of thoughts, and ornament of words: Homer was rapid in his thoughts, and took all the liberties of manners and of expressions, which his language, and the age in which he lived, allowed.

Homer's invention was more copious; Virgil's more confined: so that if Homer had not led the way, it was not in Virgil to have begun heroic poetry; for nothing can be more evident, than that the *Æneid* is but the second part of the *Iliad*; a continuation of the same story, and the persons already formed. The manners of *Æneas* are those of Homer, superadded to those

which Homer gave him. The adventures of Ulysses in the *Odyssey* are imitated in the first six books of Virgil's *Æneid*; and though the accidents are not the same, (which would have argued him of a servile copying and total barrenness of invention,) yet the seas were the same in which both the heroes wandered; and Dido cannot be denied to be the poetical daughter of Calypso.

The six latter books of Virgil's poem are the four-and-twenty *Iliads* contracted; a quarrel occasioned by a lady, a single combat, battles fought, and a town besieged. I say not this in derogation to Virgil: for his episodes are almost wholly of his own invention; and the form which he has given to the telling, makes the tale his own, even though the original story had been the same. But this proves, however, that Homer taught Virgil to design; and if invention be the first virtue of an epic poet, then the Latin poem can only be allowed the second place.

Mr. Hobbes in the preface to his own bald translation of the *Iliad*, (studying poetry as he did mathematics, when it was too late) Mr. Hobbes, I say, begins the praise of Homer where he should have ended it. He tells us that the first beauty of an epic poem consists in diction; that is, in the choice of words, and harmony of

numbers. Now the words are the colouring of the work, which in the order of nature is last to be considered; the design, the disposition, the manners, and the thoughts are all before it; where any of those are wanting or imperfect, so much is wanting or imperfect in the imitation of human life, which is in the very definition of a poem. Words indeed, like glaring colours, are the first beauties that arise, and strike the sight; but if the draught be false or tame, the figures ill disposed, the manners obscure or unnatural, then the finest colours are but daubing, and the piece is a beautiful monster at the best. Neither Virgil nor Homer were deficient in any of the former beauties; but in this last, which is expression, the Roman poet is at least equal to the Grecian; supplying the poverty of his language by his musical ear and by his diligence.

Our two great poets being so different in their tempers, one choleric and sanguine, the other phlegmatic and melancholic, that which made them excel in their several ways is, that each of them has followed his own natural inclination, as well in forming the design, as in the execution of it. The very heroes shew their authors: Achilles is hot, impetuous, revengeful,

Impiger iracundus, inexorabilis, acer.

Æneas patient, considerate, careful of his peo-

ple, and merciful to his enemies, ever submissive to the will of heaven.

I could please myself with enlarging on this subject, but am forced to defer it to a fitter time. From all I have said, I will only draw this inference; that the action of Homer being more full of vigour than that of Virgil, according to the temper of the critic, is of consequence more pleasing to the reader. One warms you by degrees; the other sets you on fire all at once, and never intermits his heat. It is the same difference which Longinus makes betwixt the effects of eloquence in Demosthenes and Tully; one persuades, the other commands.

ESSAY 61.

DELICACY OF TASTE AND PASSION.

(Hume.)

SOME people are subject to a certain delicacy of passion, which makes them extremely sensible to all the accidents of life, and gives them a lively joy upon every prosperous event, as well as a piercing grief, when they meet with misfortunes and adversity. Favours and good offices easily engage their friendship, while the smallest injury provokes their resentment; any mark of honour or distinction elevates them above measure, but they are as sensibly touched with contempt. People of this character have, no doubt, more lively enjoyments, as well as more pungent sorrows, than men of cool and sedate tempers. But I believe, when every thing is balanced, there is no one, who would not rather be of the latter character, were he entirely master of his own disposition. Good or ill fortune is very little at our disposal; and when a person that

has this sensibility of temper, meets with any misfortunes, his sorrow or resentment takes entire possession of him, and deprives him of all relish in the common occurrences of life, the right enjoyment of which forms the chief part of our happiness. Great pleasures are much less frequent than great pains; so that a sensible temper must meet with fewer trials in the former way than in latter. Not to mention, that men of such lively passions are apt to be transported beyond all bounds of prudence and discretion, and to take false steps in the conduct of life, which are often irretrievable.

There is a delicacy of taste observable in some men, which very much resembles this delicacy of passion, and produces the same sensibility to beauty and deformity of any kind, as that does to prosperity and adversity, obligations and injuries. When you present a poem or a picture to a man possessed of this talent, the delicacy of his feeling makes him be sensibly touched with every part; nor are the masterly strokes perceived with more exquisite relish and satisfaction, than the negligences or absurdities, with disgust and uneasiness. A polite and judicious conversation affords him the highest entertainment; rudeness or impertinence is as great a punishment to him. In short, delicacy of taste has the same effect as

delicacy of passion ; it enlarges the sphere both of our happiness and misery, and makes us sensible to pains as well as pleasures, which escape the rest of mankind.

I believe, however, every one will agree with me, that notwithstanding this resemblance, delicacy of taste is as much to be desired and cultivated, as delicacy of passion is to be lamented, and to be remedied if possible. The good or ill accidents of life are very little at our disposal ; but we are masters what books we shall read, what diversions we shall follow, and what company we shall keep. Philosophers have endeavoured to render happiness entirely independent of every thing external. That degree of perfection is impossible to be attained ; but every wise man will endeavour to place his happiness on such objects as chiefly depend on himself : and that is not to be attained so much by any other means as by this delicacy of sentiment. When a man is possessed of that talent, he is more happy by what pleases his taste, than by what gratifies his appetites, and receives more enjoyment from a poem or a piece of reasoning, than the most expensive luxury can afford.

Whatever connection there may be originally between these two species of delicacy, I am persuaded that nothing is so proper to cure us of

this delicacy of passion, as the cultivating of that higher and more refined taste, which enables us to judge of the characters of men, of the compositions of genius, and of the productions of the nobler arts. A greater or less relish for these obvious beauties, which strike the senses, depends entirely upon the greater or less sensibility of the temper: but with regard to the sciences and liberal arts, a fine taste is, in some measure, the same with strong sense, or at least depends so much upon it, that they are inseparable. In order to judge aright of a composition of genius, there are so many views to be taken, in many circumstances to be compared, and such a knowledge of human nature requisite, that no man, who is not possessed of the soundest judgment will ever make a tolerable critic in such performances. And this is a new reason for cultivating a relish in the liberal arts. Our judgment will strengthen by this exercise: we shall form juster notions of life; many things which please or afflict others, will appear to us too frivolous to engage our attention; and we shall lose by degrees that sensibility and delicacy of passion, which is so incommodious.

But perhaps I have gone too far in saying, that a cultivated taste for the polite arts extinguishes the passions, and renders us indifferent

to those objects, which are so fondly pursued by the rest of mankind. On farther reflection, I find that it rather improves our sensibility for all the tender and agreeable passions; at the same time that it renders the mind incapable of the rougher and more boisterous emotions.

*Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.*

For this, I think there may be assigned two very natural reasons. In the first place, nothing is so improving to the temper as the study of the beauties either of poetry, eloquence, music, or painting. They give a certain elegance of sentiment to which the rest of mankind are strangers; the emotions which they excite are soft and tender. They draw off the mind from the hurry of business and interest; cherish reflection; dispose to tranquillity; and produce an agreeable melancholy, which of all dispositions of the mind, is the best suited to love and friendship.

In the second place, a delicacy of taste is favourable to love and friendship, by confining our choice to a few people, and making us indifferent to the company and conversation of the greater part of men. You seldom find that mere men of the world, whatever strong sense they are endowed with, are very nice in distinguishing characters, or making those insensible differences

and gradations, which make one man preferable to another. Any one, who has competent sense, is sufficient for their entertainment; they talk to him of their pleasure and affairs with the same frankness that they would to another; and finding many who are fit to supply his place, they never feel any vacancy or want in his absence. But to make use of the allusion of a celebrated French author*, the judgment may be compared to a clock or watch, where the most ordinary machine is sufficient to tell the hours; but the most elaborate alone can point out the minutes and seconds, and distinguish the smallest differences of time. One that has well digested his knowledge both of books and men, has little enjoyment but in the company of a few select companions. He feels too sensibly how much all the rest of mankind fall short of the notions which he has entertained. And his affections being thus confined within a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them farther, than if they were general and undistinguished. The gaiety and frolic of a bottle companion improves with him into a solid friendship; and the ardours of a youthful appetite become an elegant passion.

* Fontenelle *Pluralité des Mondes*, Soir 6.

ESSAY 62.

FOOD FOR A COUNTRY LIFE.

(*Dryden.*)

A GOOD conscience is a port which is landlocked on every side ; and where no winds can possibly invade, no tempests can arise. There a man may stand upon the shore, and not only see his own image, but that of his Maker, clearly reflected from the undisturbed and silent waters. Reason was intended for a blessing, and such it is to men of honour and integrity, who desire no more than what they are able to give themselves, like the happy old Corycian, whom Virgil describes in his fourth Georgic, whose fruits and sallads, on which he lived contented, were all of his own growth and his own plantation. Virgil seems to think that the blessings of a country life, are not complete without an improvement of knowledge, by contemplation and reading.

O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,
Agricolas!

O happy if he knew his happy state
The swain.

It is but half possession, not to understand that happiness which we possess: a foundation of good sense, and a cultivation of learning, are required to give a seasoning to retirement, and make us taste the blessing. Eden was not made for beasts, although they were suffered to live in it; but for their master, who studied God in the works of his creation. Neither could Satan have been happy there with all his knowledge, for he wanted innocence to make him so. He brought envy, malice, and ambition into paradise, which soured to him the sweetness of the place.

Such only can enjoy the country, who are capable of thinking when they are there, and have left their passions behind them in the town. Then they are prepared for solitude, and that solitude is prepared for them.

Et secreta quies, et nescia fallere vita.

ESSAY 63.

ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

(Sir Richard Blackmore.)

THIS mortal life in its full bloom and vigour is so precarious, and in its utmost extent is so short and transient, that in the opinion of men of prudence and reflection, it mightily abates the value of our most desirable enjoyments; and it is just matter of astonishment, that since all have a perfect assurance, that their state of existence here is so uncertain, and flies away with such rapidity that the present satisfactions and delights which they must leave so soon and for ever, should not fall under greater and more universal contempt.

The longest life is a fugitive and inconsiderable duration; but if we abstract from it those parts in which we have but a naked, or undelightful, or miserable being, and therefore not to be valued, upon such a calculation, how great must the discount be? If we do not reckon the life of man

to begin till he is in possession of himself, and can exercise the faculties and powers peculiar to his species, we must not only cut off the stage of infancy and childhood from it, but likewise that of old age, which for the greater part is only the flat leavings of life, decayed and drawn off to the lees; when though the animal survives, the man scarcely exists. And yet by how many other ways is our short time contracted? Acute pains, languishing sickness, and wasting labour, besides tormenting envy and anxious care, uneasy malice, and exquisite grief, the violent perturbations and tempests of the soul, arising from a thousand various causes, reduce its duration to very scanty limits. Add to these interruptions the necessary returns of sleep, which suspends the exercise of our intellectual and sensitive faculties; and it will appear that all together they defraud us of two thirds of our time. If these allowances are made, what a mean balance will remain, as the claim of life, if taken in the view before described?

So short is the extent of our present existence, if considered in an absolute sense; but how momentary will it seem when compared with ages that will never end? What is this span of life, when we reflect upon interminable duration. What is time but a little rill or drop, compared with the boundless ocean of eternity?

As this terrestrial globe is reduced to a despicable spot, when we contemplate the immense body of the sun, and as the sun itself loses its magnitude, and is no more than a glowing atom, when we consider the amazing circumference of the universe ; so the whole system of the universe is contracted to the minutest size if set in competition with the gulphs of space that lie beyond it, and the unlimited expanse of vast immensity. In like manner should the life of man continue many ages, even as long as the sun and moon endured, yet when measured with immortality, it would shrink to an unextended point. What is man but the tenant of a mould of clay, endowed indeed with angelic faculties, but a perishing wight, and an insect in duration ! What is this intelligent creature who thus dissolves like the morning cloud, and as the evening dew vanishes away ! and what is life but a tender flower that unfolds its beauty and dies in its bloom, an empty vapour of the air, that as soon as kindled glances on our sight and disappears like a sudden flash. So short is the continuance of man in this mortal state, if compared with endless duration.

ESSAY 64.

FRAILITY OF HUMAN LIFE.

(Pope.)

GOOD God, what an incongruous animal is man! How unsettled in his best part, his soul; and how changing and variable in his frame of body? The constancy of the one shook by every notion; the temperature of the other affected by every blast of wind! What is he altogether but one mighty inconsistency; sickness and pain is the lot of one half of him; doubt and fear the portion of the other! What a bustle we make about passing our time, when all our space is but a point? What aims and ambitions are crowded into this little instant of our life, which (as Shakespeare finely words it) is rounded with a sleep?

Our whole extent of being is no more in the eye of him who gave it, than a scarce perceptible moment of duration. Those animals, whose circle of living is limited to three or four hours,

as the naturalists tell us, are yet as long lived and possess as wide a scene of action as man, if we consider him with a view to all space and all eternity. Who knows what plots, what achievements, a mite may perform in his kingdom of a grain of dust, within his life of some minutes; and of how much less consideration than even this, is the life of man in the sight of God who is for ever and for ever?

Who that thinks in this train, but must see the world, and its contemptible grandeurs, lessen before him at every thought. It is enough to make one remain stupefied in a poise of inaction, void of all desires, of all designs, of all friendship.

ESSAY 65.

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF SICKNESS.

(Pope.)

NOTHING makes a more ridiculous figure in a man's life, than the disparity we often find in him sick and well: thus one of an unfortunate constitution is perpetually exhibiting a miserable example of the weakness of his mind, and of his body, in their turns. I have had frequent opportunities of late to consider myself in these different views, and I hope, have received some advantage by it, if what Waller says be true, that

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light thro' chinks that time has made.

Then surely sickness, contributing no less than old age, to shake down this scaffolding of the body, may discover the inward structure more plainly. Sickness is a sort of early old age, it teaches us a diffidence in our earthly state, and inspires

with the thoughts of a future, better than a thousand volumes of philosophers and divines. It gives so warning a concussion to those props of our vanity, our strength and youth, that we think of fortifying ourselves within, when there is so little dependence on our outworks.

Youth at the very best is but a betrayer of human life in a gentler and smoother manner than age; it is like a stream that nourishes a plant upon a bank, and causes it to flourish and blossom to the sight, but at the same time is undermining it at the root in secret. My youth has dealt more fairly and openly with me. It has afforded several prospects of my danger, and given me an advantage not very common to young men, that the attractions of the world have not dazzled me much; and I begin where most people end, with a full conviction of the emptiness of all sorts of ambition, and the unsatisfactory nature of all human pleasures. When a smart fit of sickness tells me this scurvy tenement of my body will fall in a short time, I am e'en as unconcerned as that honest Hibernian, who being in bed during the great storm, and told the house would tumble over his head, made answer, "What care I for the house? I am only a lodger."

I fancy it is the best time to die when one is in the best humour; and so excessively weak as I now am, I may say with conscience, that I am not at all uneasy at the thought, that many men whom I never esteemed, are likely to enjoy the world after me.

When I reflect what an inconsiderable atom every single man is, with respect to the whole creation, methinks, it is a shame to be concerned at the removal of such a trivial animal as I am. The morning after my exit, the sun will rise as bright as ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green, the world will proceed in its old course, people will laugh as heartily, and marry as fast as before.

“The memory of man (as it is elegantly expressed in the book of Wisdom) passeth away
“as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth
“but one day.” There are reasons enough in the fourth chapter of the same book to make any young man contented with the prospect of death. “For honourable age is not that which
“standeth in length of time, or is measured by
“number of years. But wisdom is the grey hair
“to men, and an unspotted life is old age. He
“was taken away speedily, lest wickedness should
“alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his
“soul.”

ESSAY 66.

PREDOMINANCE OF GOOD OVER EVIL.

(*Melmoth.*)

PHILOSOPHY can never be employed in an office more unsuitable to her proper character and functions, than in setting forth such representations of human life as tend to put mankind out of humour with their present being: and yet into this unworthy service some eminent moralists both ancient and modern have not scrupled to compel her! The genuine effects of true wisdom and knowledge, are altogether of a different complexion; as those speculative writers, whose studies and talents have qualified them for taking the most accurate and comprehensive survey of the natural and moral world, have found the result of their inquiries terminate in the strongest motives for a grateful acquiescence in the beneficent administration of Providence.

To be able indeed to clear up all the difficult-
VOL. II. I

ties which occur in attempting to account for that degree of evil which the Creator has permitted to enter among his works, will in vain, perhaps, be expected, till the mental sight shall be purged with that heavenly "*euphrasy*" with which the angel in Milton removed the film from Adam's eyes when he shewed him in a vision the fate of his descendants. In the mean time however there is abundant evidence to justify the goodness of the Creator in his "ways to men," and dissipate every darker cloud, which in a gloomy state of mind is apt to overcast the prospect of human condition.

The truth is, the *natural* evils of life are but few and inconsiderable, when compared with those which are of man's own production. Pain and disease, which now make such a variety of dreadful articles in every estimate of human calamities, would be much diminished if the contributions of vice and luxury were fairly subtracted from the account. And when all deductions of this kind are justly made, if we examine the remaining evils to which mankind are *necessarily* exposed; it will appear that Providence has kindly interwoven certain secret consolations and unexpected softenings, which render them more tolerable when realised than they seem in apprehension.

Nothing indeed is more certain than what an incomparable moralist *, with his usual truth of sentiment, and elegance of imagination, has finely remarked, that "the evils of this life appear like rocks and precipices, rugged and barren at a distance; but at our nearer approach we find little fruitful spots and refreshing springs mixed with the harshness and deformity of nature."

To apply this general observation to a particular instance. Those who from the more commodious stations of human life, look down upon the lowest and most laborious classes of mankind, are apt to consider their condition as painful proofs of the miseries to which the majority of the sons of men are inevitably condemned. But in fact these supposed objects of commiseration, are so far from being in a state deservedly to be lamented, that perhaps they would be very considerable losers if they were to exchange it for a more exalted sphere of action.

That this is no ideal representation of this case, let an unexceptionable witness, who had occasion to observe it in some of its strongest exhibitions, attest. "In my travels," says the good bishop Pontoppedan, "over the highest mountains of Norway, which are covered with

* Addison.

“ snow, and where horses are of no service, I
“ have seen peasants in great numbers do the
“ work of horses, and indeed they seem equal
“ to those animals in strength. They go on
“ singing all the while, and hold out for nine
“ hours together at the hardest labour imaginable,
“ with incredible cheerfulness and alacrity.” He
adds, “ the peasants of both sexes assemble to-
“ together by hundreds, I might say thousands,
“ about the middle of January to make their
“ winter harvest of the rich produce of the ocean.
“ They keep out at sea all the day, and a great
“ part of the night by moonlight, in open boats,
“ and after that crowd together by scores, into
“ little huts, where they can scarcely have room
“ to lay themselves down, in their wet cloaths.
“ The next morning they return to the same la-
“ borious employments, with as much *pleasure*
“ and cheerfulness as if they were going to a
“ merry-making.”

In contemplating the moral state of mankind the horror of the view, in like manner, will be much alleviated by taking in every mitigating circumstance that attends the prospect. There is reason to think with the most judicious writers on this interesting question, that there are few individuals, who in the course of their lives have not been the authors of more good than evil.

Prejudice, resentment, or opposition of interest may, and often do, produce particular instances of the sad effects of the malevolent and selfish passions, in the very same man, who in the general tenour of his conduct and connections, regularly exercises the kind and social affections.

But in determining concerning the comparative prevalency of moral good and evil, a hasty or peevish remarker, while he examines the weight of the malignant action, is not equally careful to inquire into the state of the opposite scale. There are many latent circumstances also necessary to be known, before we are fully qualified to give any particular action its due, precise, and distinguishing denomination. The motive and intention of the agent, the point of view in which the action appeared to his own eye; the degree of surprise or premeditation, of knowledge or ignorance, with which it was committed; are nice discriminations which an uncandid observer always overlooks, and a charitable one cannot discern; yet these constitute the true nature and essential characteristic of moral conduct.

There is another circumstance which may very much contribute to lead the judgment into unfavourable conclusions upon this subject: vicious actions strike more forcibly upon the

mind, as being in their nature more open to public notoriety, than those of an opposite quality. Atrocious deviations from moral rectitude rarely pass undiscovered ; whereas many of the noblest and most laudable instances of human merit, are frequently known only to the parties immediately concerned, and not seldom lie concealed in the breast of the worthy agent. Vice obtrudes itself upon the public eye ; but virtue must be sought for in less conspicuous scenes. The *secretum iter* and the *fallentis semita vitæ*, are the paths in which her votaries are most frequently to be found. No wonder therefore, if in computing their comparative number, very erroneous calculations are apt to be made.

When all reflections of this kind, together with others which might be mentioned of the same tendency, are duly considered, and their full force admitted ; it will not perhaps, be thought an unwarrantable inference, that there is an over-balance of *good* in the moral as well as in the natural world.

ESSAY 67.

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.

(*Lord Shaftesbury.*)

THE celebrated wits of the *Miscellaneous* race, the *Essay writers*, casual discoverers, reflection-coiners, meditation-founders, and others of the irregular kind of writers, may plead it as their peculiar advantage that they follow the variety of nature, and in such a climate as ours their plea, no doubt, may be very just. We islanders famed for other mutabilities are particularly noted for the variableness and inconstancy of our weather. And if our taste in letters be found answerable to this temperature of our climate, certainly a writer must, in our account, be more valuable in his kind, as he can agreeably surprize his reader, by sudden changes and transports from one to another.

Were it not for the known prevalency of this relish, and the apparent deference paid to these

geniuses who are said to elevate and surprise, the editor of these *Miscellanies* might, in all probability, be afraid to entertain his readers with this multifarious, complex and desultory kind of reading. It is certain that if we consider the beginning and process of our present work, we shall find sufficient variation in it. From a professed levity we lapsed into a sort of gravity unsuitable to our manner of setting out. We have steered an adventurous course; and seem scarcely come out of a strong and rough sea. It is time indeed we should enjoy a calm, and instead of expanding our sails before the swelling gusts, it befits us to retire under the lee-shore, and ply the oars in smooth water.

It is the philosopher, the orator, or the poet whom we compare to some first rate vessel, which launches out into the wide sea, and with a proud motion insults the encountering surges. We *Essay writers* are of the small craft or galley kind. We move chiefly by starts and bounds; as our motion is by frequent intervals renewed. We have no great adventure in view; nor can tell certainly whither we are bound. We undertake no mighty voyage of star or compass; but row from creek to creek, keep up a coasting trade, and are fitted only for fine weather and the summer season.

With the same view we miscellaneous authors, apprehending the natural lassitude and satiety of our indolent readers, have prudently betaken ourselves to the way of Essays; that as they proceed by frequent intervals of repose, contrived on purpose for them, they may from time to time be advertised of what is yet to come, and be tempted thus to renew their application.

ESSAY 68.

ALCANDER AND SEPTIMIUS.

(*Goldsmith.*)

ATHENS, even long after the decline of the Roman empire, still continued the seat of learning, politeness and wisdom. The emperors and generals who in these periods of approaching ignorance still felt a passion for science, from time to time added to its buildings, or increased its professorships. Theodoric the Ostrogoth, was of the number; he repaired those schools

which barbarity was suffering to fall into decay, and continued those pensions to men of learning, which avaricious governors had monopolised to themselves.

In this city and about this period, Alcander and Septimius were fellow students together. The one the most subtle reasoner of all the Lycæum; the other the most eloquent speaker in the Academic grove. Mutual admiration soon begot an acquaintance, and a similitude of disposition made them perfect friends. Their fortunes were nearly equal, their studies the same, and they were natives of the two most celebrated cities in the world; for Alcander was of Athens, Septimius came from Rome.

In this mutual harmony they lived for some time together, when Alcander, after passing the first part of his youth in the indolence of philosophy, thought at length of entering into the busy world, and as a previous step, placed his affections on Hypatia, a lady of exquisite beauty. Hypatia shewed no dislike to his addresses. The day of their intended nuptials was fixed, the previous ceremonies were performed, and nothing now remained but her being conducted in triumph to the apartment of the intended bridegroom.

An exultation in his own happiness, or his

being unable to enjoy any satisfaction without making his friend Septimius a partner, prevailed upon him to introduce his mistress to his fellow student, which he did with all the gaiety of a man who found himself equally happy in friendship and love. Septimius no sooner saw her, but he was smitten with an involuntary passion. He used every effort, but in vain, to suppress desires at once so imprudent and unjust. He retired to his apartment in inexpressible agony; and the emotions of his mind in a short time became so strong, that they brought on a fever, which the physicians judged incurable.

During this illness Alcander watched him with all the anxiety of fondness, and brought his mistress to join in those amiable offices of friendship. The sagacity of the physicians, by this means, soon discovered the cause of their patient's disorder; and Alcander, being apprised of their discovery, at length extorted a reluctant confession from his dying friend.

It would but delay the narrative to describe the conflict between love and friendship in the breast of Alcander on this occasion; it is enough to say, that the Athenians were at this time arrived to such refinement in morals, that every virtue was carried to excess. In short, forgetful of his own felicity, he gave up his intended bride

in all her charms, to the young Roman. They were married privately by his connivance; and this unlooked for change of fortune, wrought as unexpected a change in the constitution of the now happy Septimius. In a few days he was perfectly recovered, and set out with his fair partner for Rome.

Here, by an exertion of those talents of which he was so eminently possessed, he in a few years arrived at the highest dignities of the state, and was constituted the city judge or prætor.

Meanwhile Alcander not only felt the pain of being separated from his friend and mistress, but a prosecution was also commenced against him by the relations of Hypatia, for having basely given her up, as was suggested, for money. Neither innocence of the crime laid to his charge, nor eloquence in his own defence, were able to withstand the influence of a powerful party. He was cast, and condemned to pay an enormous fine. Unable to raise so large a sum at the time appointed, his possessions were confiscated, himself stript of the habit of freedom, exposed in the market-place, and sold as a slave to the highest bidder.

A merchant of Thrace becoming his purchaser, Alcander, with some other companions of distress, was carried into the region of desolation

and sterility. His stated employment was to follow the herds of an imperious master, and his skill in hunting was all that was allowed him to supply a precarious subsistence. Condemned to hopeless servitude, every morning waked him to renewal of famine or toil; and every change of season served but to aggravate his unsheltered distress. Nothing but death or flight was left to him; and almost certain death was the consequence of attempting to fly.

After some years of bondage, however, an opportunity of escaping offered; he embraced it with ardour, and travelling by night, and lodging in caverns by day, to shorten a long story, he at last arrived at Rome. The day of Alcander's arrival Septimius sat in the forum administering justice; and hither our wanderer came, expecting to be instantly known, and publicly acknowledged. Here he stood the whole day among the crowd, watching the eyes of the judge, and expecting to be noticed; but so much was he altered by a long succession of hardships that he passed entirely without notice, and in the evening when he was going up to the prætor's chair he was brutally repulsed by the attending lictors.

The attention of the poor is generally driven from one ungrateful object to another. Night coming on, he found himself under the necessity

of seeking a place to lie in, and yet knew not where to apply. Emaciated and in rags, none of the citizens would harbour so much wretchedness, and sleeping in the streets might be attended with interruption or danger ; in short he was obliged to take up his lodging in one of the tombs without the city, the usual retreat of guilt, poverty, or despair.

In this mansion of horror, laying his head on an inverted urn, he forgot his miseries for awhile in sleep ; and virtue found on this flinty couch more ease than down can supply to the guilty.

At midnight two robbers came to make this cave their retreat, but happening to disagree about the division of their plunder, one of them stabbed the other to the heart, and left him weltering in blood at the entrance. In these circumstances the dead body was found the next morning, and this naturally induced a further enquiry. The alarm was spread, the cave examined, Alcander was found sleeping, and immediately apprehended and accused of robbery and murder. The circumstances against him were strong, and the wretchedness of his appearance confirmed suspicion. Misfortune and he were now so long acquainted, that he at last became regardless of life. He detested a world where he had found only ingratitude, falsehood and

cruelty, and was determined to make no defence.

Thus lowering with resolution, he was dragged, bound with cords, before the tribunal of Septimius. The proofs were positive against him, and he offered nothing in his own vindication; the judge, therefore, was proceeding to doom him to a cruel and ignominious death, when, as if illumined by a ray from heaven, he discovered through all his misery, the features, though dim with sorrow, of his long lost loved Alcander. It is impossible to describe his joy and his pain, on this strange occasion; happy in once more seeing the person he most loved on earth, distressed at finding him in such circumstances. Thus agitated by contending passions, he flew from his tribunal, and falling on the neck of his dear benefactor, burst into an agony of distress.

The attention of the multitude was soon, however, divided by another object. The robber who had been really guilty, was apprehended selling his plunder, and struck with a panic confessed his crime. He was brought to the same tribunal, and acquitted every other person of any partnership in his guilt.

Need the sequel be related? Alcander was liberated, shared the friendship and the honour of his friend Septimius, lived afterwards in hap-

piness and ease, and left it to be engraved on his tomb, "that no circumstances are so desperate, which Providence may not relieve."

ESSAY 69.

ON GRACE IN WRITING.

(*Melmoth.*)

I WILL not undertake to mark out with any sort of precision, that idea which I would express by the word *grace*; and perhaps, it can no more be clearly described than justly defined. To give, however, a general intimation of what I mean, when I apply that term to compositions of genius, I would resemble it to that easy air, which so remarkably distinguishes certain persons of a genteel and liberal cast. It consists not only in the particular beauty of single parts, but arises from the general symmetry and construction of the whole. An author may be just in his sentiments, lively in his figures,

and clear in his expressions; yet may have no claim to be admitted into the rank of finished writers. These must be so agreeably united as mutually to reflect beauty upon each other; their arrangement must be so happily disposed as not to admit of the least transposition without manifest prejudice to the entire piece. The thoughts, the metaphors, the allusions, and the diction, should appear easy and natural, and seem to arise like so many spontaneous productions, rather than as the effects of art or labour.

Whatever, therefore, is forced or affected in the sentiments; whatever is pompous or pedantic in the expression, is the very reverse of *grace*. Her mien is neither that of a prude nor a coquet; she is regular without formality; and sprightly without being fantastical. Grace, in short, is to good writing what a proper light is to a fine picture; it not only shews all the figures in their several proportions and relations, but shews them in the most advantageous manner.

As gentility appears in the minutest action, and improves the most inconsiderable gesture; so grace is discovered in the placing even of a single word, or the turn of a mere expletive. Neither is this inexpressible quality confined to one species of composition only, but extends to

all the various kinds; to the humble pastoral as well as to the lofty epic; from the slightest letter to the most solemn discourse.

I know not whether Sir William Temple may not be considered as the first of our prose authors, who introduced a graceful manner into our language; at least that quality does not seem to have appeared early or spread far, among us. But wheresoever we may look for its origin, it is certainly to be found in its highest perfection in the Essays of an author, whose writings will be distinguished as long as politeness and good sense have any admirers. That becoming air which Tully esteemed the criterion of fine composition, and which every reader, he says, imagines so easy to be imitated, yet will find so difficult to attain, is the prevailing characteristic of all that excellent author's most elegant performances. In a word, we may justly apply to him what Plato, in his allegorical language, says of Aristophanes; that the Graces having searched all the world for a temple wherein they might for ever dwell, settled at last in the breast of Mr. ADDISON.

ESSAY 70.

OF NOTHING.

(Fielding.)

IT is extremely hard to define Nothing in positive terms, I shall therefore do it in negative. Nothing then is not Something. And here I must object to an error concerning it, which is that it is in no place, which is an indirect way of depriving it of existence ; whereas indeed it possesses the greatest and noblest place on this earth, viz. the human brain. But, indeed, this mistake has been sufficiently refuted by many wise men ; who having spent their whole lives in the contemplation and pursuit of Nothing, have at last gravely concluded that there is Nothing in this world.

Farther as Nothing is not Something, so every thing which is not Something is Nothing ; and wherever Something is not, Nothing is ; a very large allowance in its favour, as must appear to persons well skilled in human affairs. For in-

stance, when a bladder is full of wind, it is full of Something; but when that is let out we aptly say there is Nothing in it. The same may be as justly asserted of a man as of a bladder. However well he may be dawbed with lace, or with titles; yet if he have not Something in him, we may predicate the same of him as of an empty bladder.

But if we cannot reach an adequate knowledge of the true essence of Nothing, no more than we can of matter; let us in imitation of the experimental philosophers, examine some of its properties or accidents.

And here we shall see the infinite advantages which Nothing has over Something; for while the latter is confined to one sense, or two perhaps at the most, Nothing is the object of them all.

For first Nothing may be seen, as is plain from the relation of persons who have recovered from high fevers; and perhaps may be suspected from some (at least) of those who have seen apparitions both on earth, and in the clouds. Nay, I have often heard it confessed by men, when asked what they saw at such a place, and time, that they saw Nothing. Admitting that there are two sights, viz. a first and second sight, according to the firm belief of some, Nothing



must be allowed to have a very large share of the first; and as to the second it has all entirely to itself.

Secondly, Nothing may be heard, of which the same proofs may be given as of the foregoing. A strong instance of this is, the Argive mentioned by Horace, who sitting in an empty theatre, imagined that he witnessed the performance of a play, and heard the applauses of the audience.

Fiut haud ignobilis Argis
Qui se credebat miros audire Tragædos
In vacuo lætus sessor, Plausorque theatro.

That Nothing may be tasted and smelt, is not only known to persons of delicate palates and nostrils. How commonly do we hear, that such a thing smells or tastes of Nothing? The latter I have heard asserted of a dish compounded of five or six savoury ingredients. And as to the former, I remember an elderly gentlewoman who had a great antipathy to the smell of apples, and who upon discovering that an idle boy had fastened a mellow apple to her train, contracted a habit of smelling them, whenever the boy came within her sight, though there were then none within a mile of her.

Lastly, feeling; and sure, if any sense seems more particularly the object of matter only, which must be allowed to be Something, this does.

Nay, I have heard it asserted (and with a colour of truth) of several persons, that they can feel Nothing but a cudgel. Notwithstanding which, some have felt the motions of the spirit; and others have felt very bitterly the misfortunes of their friends, without endeavouring to relieve them. Now these seem two plain instances that Nothing is an object of this sense. Nay, I have heard a surgeon declare, while he was cutting off a patient's leg, that he was sure he felt Nothing.

Nothing is as well the object of our passions as our senses. Thus there are many who love Nothing, some who hate Nothing, and some who fear Nothing.

We have already mentioned three of the properties of a noun to belong to Nothing; we shall find the fourth likewise, to be as justly claimed by it; and that Nothing is as often the object of the understanding as of the senses. Indeed, some have imagined that knowledge with the adjective *human* placed before it, is another word for Nothing; And one of the wisest men in the world declared he knew Nothing. But without carrying it so far, this I believe may be allowed, that it is at least possible for a man to know Nothing. And whoever has read over many works of our ingenious moderns, with proper attention

and emolument, will I believe confess, that if he understands them right, he understands Nothing.

This is a secret not known to all readers ; and want of this knowledge has occasioned much puzzling ; for when a book, or chapter, or paragraph, has seemed to the reader to contain Nothing, his modesty has sometimes persuaded him that the true meaning of the author has escaped him, instead of concluding, as in reality the fact was, that the author in the said book did truly and bona fide mean Nothing.

I remember once, at the table of a person of great eminence, and one no less distinguished by superiority of wit than fortune, when a very dark passage was read out of a poet, famous for being so sublime that he is often out of the sight of his reader ; some persons present declared that they did not understand his meaning. The gentleman himself, casting his eyes over the performance, testified a surprise at the dullness of the company ; seeing Nothing could, he said, possibly be plainer than the meaning of the passage which they could not comprehend. This puzzled us all again, to little purpose. We frankly owned that we could not find it out, and desired he would explain it ; Explain it ! said the gentleman, why he means Nothing.

In fact this mistake arises from a too vulgar error among persons unacquainted with the mystery of writing, who imagine it impossible, that any one should sit down to write without any meaning at all; whereas in reality, Nothing is more common. For not to instance in myself, who have contentedly sat down to write this essay with Nothing in my head, or which is much the same thing, to write about Nothing, it may be incontestably proved *ab effectu*, that Nothing is commoner among the moderns. The inimitable author of a preface to the post-humous Eclogues of a late ingenious young gentleman says, there are men, who sit down to write what they think, and others to think what they shall write. But indeed there is a third, and a much more numerous sort, who never think either before they sit down or afterwards, and who when they produce on paper what was before in their heads, are sure to produce Nothing.

Thus we have endeavoured to demonstrate the nature of Nothing, by shewing first definitively what it is not, and secondly by describing what it is. The next thing therefore proposed is to shew its various kinds.

Now some imagine these kinds differ in name only. But without endeavouring to refute

so absurd an opinion, especially as these different kinds of Nothing occur frequently in the best authors, I shall content myself with setting them down, and leave it to the determination of the distinguishing reader, whether it is probable, or indeed possible, that they all convey one and the same meaning.

These are Nothing *per se* Nothing ; Nothing at all ; Nothing in the least ; Nothing in nature ; Nothing in the world ; Nothing in the whole world ; Nothing in the whole universal world ; and perhaps many others of which we say—Nothing.

ESSAY 71.

FASHIONABLE DISEASES AND
REMEDIES.*(Sir William Temple.)*

IN the course of my life I have often pleased or entertained myself with observing the various and fantastical changes of the diseases generally complained of, and of the remedies in common vogue, which were like birds of passage, very much seen or heard of at one season, disappearing in another, and commonly succeeded by some of a very different kind.

When I was young, nothing was so much feared or talked of as rickets among children, and consumption among young people of both sexes. After these the spleen came in play and grew a formal disease; then the scurvy, which was the general complaint, and both were thought to appear in many various guises. After these, and for a time, nothing was so much talked of as the ferment of the blood, which

passed for the cause of all sorts of ailments, that neither physicians nor patients knew well what to make of.

To all these succeeded vapours, which serve the same turn, and furnish occasion of complaint among persons whose bodies or minds ail something, but they know not what; and among the Chinese would pass for mists of the mind, or fumes of the brain, rather than indispositions of any other part.

Yet these employ our physicians, perhaps, more than other diseases, who are fain to humour such patients in their fancies of being ill, and to prescribe some remedies, for fear of losing their practice to others, that pretend more skill in finding out the cause of diseases, or care in advising remedies, of which neither they nor their patients find any effects besides some gains to one, and amusement to the other. This I suppose may have contributed much to the mode of going to the waters, either cold or hot, upon so many occasions, or else upon none besides that of entertainment, and which commonly may have no other effect. And it is well if this be the worst of the frequent use of those waters, which though commonly innocent, are yet sometimes dangerous; if the tempers of the persons; or the

cause of the indisposition be unhappily mistaken, especially in people of age.

As diseases have changed vogue, so have remedies in my time and observation. I remember at one time the taking of tobacco, at another the drinking of warm beer, approved as universal remedies; then swallowing pebble-stones, in imitation of falconers curing hawks. One doctor pretended to help all heats and fevers by drinking as much cold spring water as the patient could bear; at another swallowing a spoonful of powder of sea biscuit after meals was infallible for all indigestion and so preventing diseases. Then coffee and tea began their successive reigns. The infusion ~~of~~ powder of steel have had their turns, and certain drops of several names and compositions; but none that I find have established their authority either long or generally, by any constant and sensible successes of their reign, but have rather passed like a mode, which every one is apt to follow, and finds the most convenient or graceful while it lasts, and begins to dislike in both those respects when it goes out of fashion. Thus men are apt to play with their healths and their lives as they do with their clothes, which may be the better excused, since both are transitory, so subject to be spoiled

by common use, to be torn by accidents, and at best to be so soon worn out.

In the midst of such uncertainties of health and of physic, for my own part I have in the general course of my life and of many acute diseases, as well as some habitual, trusted to God Almighty, to nature, to temperance or abstinence, and the use of common remedies either vulgarly known, and approved, like proverbs, by long observation and experience, either of my own, or of such persons as have fallen in the way of my observation or enquiry.

ESSAY 72.

OBSCURITY A CAUSE OF THE
SUBLIME.

(Burke.)

TO make any thing very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom ourselves to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes. Every one will be sensible of this, who considers how greatly night adds to our dread, in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings.

Those despotic governments which are founded on the passions of men, and principally upon the passion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the public eye. The policy has been the same in many cases of religion. Almost all

the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Americans at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose too the Druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods, and the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. No person seems better to have understood the secret of heightening or setting terrible things, if I may use the expression, in their strongest light, by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton. His description of Death is admirably studied; it is astonishing with what a significant and expressive uncertainty of strokes and colouring, he has finished the portrait of the king of terrors.

The other shape,

If shape (it might be called that shape had none)
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd;
For each seem'd either; black it stood as night;
Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;
And shook a dreadful dart. What seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

In this description all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree.

There are two striking passages in Scripture, which owe their sublimity principally to the terrible uncertainty of the thing described. The first is from the book of Job.

“ In thoughts from the visions of the night,
“ when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came
“ upon me, and trembling, which made all my
“ bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my
“ face ; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood
“ still, but I could not discern the form thereof,
“ an image was before mine eyes ; there was si-
“ lence, and I heard a voice, saying : Shall mortal
“ man be more just than God ? Shall a man be
“ more pure than his Maker ?”

The second is from the book of Kings *.

“ And Elijah came thither unto a cave and
“ lodged there, and behold the word of the Lord
“ came to him, and he said unto him, What
“ dost thou here, Elijah ? And he said, I have
“ been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts ;
“ for the children of Israel have forsaken thy co-
“ venant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy
“ prophets with the sword ; and I, even I only,
“ am left, and they seek my life to take it away.
“ And he said go forth, and stand upon the mount
“ before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed
“ by, and a great and strong wind rent the moun-
“ tains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the
“ Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind : and

* We have added this second quotation as an instance of the sublime derived from obscurity, not inferior to the first.

“after the wind an earthquake, but the
 “Lord was not in the earthquake: and after
 “the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not
 “in the fire: and after the fire a still small
 “voice *.”

In both these sublime descriptions we are first prepared, with the utmost solemnity, for the vision; we are first terrified before we are let even into the obscure cause of our emotion; but when the grand cause of terror makes its appearance, what is it? Is it not wrapt up in the shades of its own incomprehensible darkness, more awful, more strikingly terrible, than the liveliest description, than the clearest painting could possibly make it.

* Kings, xix. 9—12.

ESSAY 73.

COMPARATIVE MERIT OF THE
TWO SEXES.

(Melmoth.)

I AM not of Montaigne's opinion, that the souls of both sexes were cast in the same mould : on the contrary I rather think that they may be wrought off from different models. Yet the casts may be equally perfect, though it should be allowed that they are essentially different. Nature, it is certain, has traced out a separate course of action for the two sexes; and as they are appointed to distinct offices of life, it is not improbable that there may be something distinct likewise in the frame of their minds ; that there may be a kind of sex in the very soul.

I cannot, therefore, but wonder, that Plato should have thought it reasonable to admit women into an equal share of the dignities and offices of his imaginary commonwealth ; and that the

wisdom of the Egyptians should have so strangely inverted the order of Providence, as to confine the men to domestic affairs, whilst the women, it is said, were engaged abroad in the active and laborious scenes of business. History, it must be owned, will supply some few female instances of all the most masculine virtues : but appearances of that extraordinary kind are too uncommon to support the notion of a general equality in the natural powers of their mind.

This much, however, seems evident, that there are certain moral boundaries which nature has drawn between the two sexes ; and that neither of them can pass over the limits of the other, without equally deviating from the beauty and decorum of their respective characters. Boadicea in armour is to me, at least, as extravagant a sight as Achilles in petticoats.

In determining, therefore, the comparative merits of the two sexes, it is no derogation from female excellency, that it differs in kind from that which distinguishes the male part of our species. And if in general it shall be found that women fill up their appointed circle of action with greater regularity and dignity than men ; the claim of preference cannot be justly decided in our favor. In the prudential and æconomical parts of life, I think it undeniable that they rise above us. And

if true fortitude of mind is best discovered by a chearful resignation to the measures of Providence, we shall not find reason perhaps to claim that most singular of the human virtues as our peculiar privilege. There are numbers of the other sex, who from natural delicacy of constitution, pass through one continued scene of suffering, from their cradles to their graves, with a firmness of resolution that would deserve so many statues to be erected to their memories, if heroism were not estimated more by the splendor than the merit of actions.

But whatever real difference there may be between the moral or intellectual powers of the male and female mind ; nature does not seem to have marked the distinction so strongly as our vanity is willing to imagine ; and after all, perhaps, education will be found to constitute the principal superiority. It must be acknowledged, at least, that in this article we have every advantage over the softer sex, that art and industry can possibly secure to us. The most animating examples of Greece and Rome are set before us, as early as we are capable of any observation ; and the noblest compositions of the antients are given into our hands, almost as soon as we have strength to hold them : while the employments of the other sex at the same

period of life, are too generally the reverse of every thing that can open or enlarge their minds, or fill them with just and rational notions. The truth is, female education is so much worse than none, as it is better to leave the mind to its natural suggestions, than to lead it into false pursuits, and contract its views, by turning them upon the lowest and most trifling objects. We seem indeed, by the manner in which we usually suffer girls to be trained, to consider women agreeably to the opinion of certain Mahometan doctors, and treat them as if we believed they have no souls.

Why else are they

Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
To dress and troll the tongue and roll the eye ?

This strange neglect of cultivating the mind can hardly be allowed as good policy ; when it is considered how much the interest of society is concerned in the rectitude of their understandings. That season of our life which is most susceptible of the strongest impressions, is necessarily under female direction ; and there are few instances, perhaps, in which the sex is not one of the secret springs that regulates the most important movements of private or public transactions.

What Cato observed of his countrymen, is in one respect, true of every nation under the sun, "The Romans govern the world, but the women govern the Romans."

If it be true then (as true it is) that female influence is thus extensive; nothing, certainly, can be of more importance, than to give it a proper tendency, by the assistance of a well directed education. Far am I, however, from recommending any attempts to render women learned; yet surely it is necessary they should be raised above ignorance. Such a general tincture of the most useful sciences as may serve to free the mind from vulgar prejudices, and give it a relish for the rational exercise of its powers, might justly enter into the plan of female education. That sex might be taught to turn the course of their reflections into a proper and advantageous channel, without the danger of rendering them too elevated for the feminine duties of life. In a word, I would consider them as designed by Providence for use as well as shew, and trained up not only as women, but as rational creatures.

ESSAY 74.

COLOUR AND FORM CONSTITUENT
PARTS OF BEAUTY.

(Spence.)

EVERY object that is pleasing to the eye, or delightful to the mind, may be called beautiful; so that beauty, in general, may stretch as wide as the visible creation, or even as far as the imagination can range, which is a sort of new or secondary creation. Thus we speak not only of the beauties of an engaging prospect, of the rising and setting sun, or of a fine starry heaven, but of a picture, statue and building; and even of the actions, characters and thoughts of men. I shall, however, confine my present subject to visible beauty; and to such only as may be called personal, and again to such as is natural or real, and not such as is national or customary; as the thick lips of the good people of Bantam, or the excessive small feet of the ladies in China.

Every thing, then, belonging to personal beauty will fall under one or other of these few heads, colour, form, expression, grace: the two former of which I look upon as the body, the two latter as the soul of beauty.

Though colour be the lowest of all the constituent parts of beauty, yet it is vulgarly the most striking, and the most observed. For which there is a very obvious reason, "that every body can see, and very few can judge;" the beauties of colour require much less of judgment than those of form, expression, or grace.

As to the colour of the body in general, the most beautiful, perhaps, that ever was imagined, was that which Apelles expressed in his famous Venus; and which though the picture itself be lost, Cicero has, in some degree, preserved to us, in his excellent description of it. It was as we learn from him, a fine red, beautifully intermixed and incorporated with white, and diffused in its due proportion, through each part of the body. Such are the descriptions of a most beautiful skin in several of the Roman poets*; and

* We could quote many instances, but we confine ourselves at present to the beautiful description of the blush of Lavinia, in Virgil's 12th *Æneid*.

Accipit vocem lachrymis Lavinia matris
Flagrantes perfusa genas : cui plurimus ignem

Subjecit

such often is the colouring of Titian, particularly in his sleeping Venus, or whatever other beauty that charming piece was meant to represent.

The reason why these colours please so much is not only their natural liveliness, nor the much greater charms they obtain from their being properly blended together, but is also owing in some degree to the idea they carry with them of good health, without which all beauty grows languid and less engaging, and with which it always recovers an additional life and lustre.

As to the colour of the face in particular, a great deal of its beauty is owing (besides the causes I have already mentioned) to variety, that being designed by nature for the greatest course of different colours, of any part of the

*Subjecit rubor, et calefacta per ora cucurrit.
Indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro
Si quis ebur; vel mixta rubent ubi lilia multa
Alba rosâ : tales virgo dabat ore colores.*

Or as Dryden has translated or rather paraphrased it :

At this a flood of tears Lavinia shed ;
A crimson blush her beauteous face o'erspread,
Varying her cheeks by turns with white and red,
The driving colours, never at a stay
Run here and there ; and flush, and fade away.
Delightful change ! thus Indian ivory shows,
Which, with the bordering paint of purple glows ;
Or lilies damask'd by the neighbouring rose.

human body. Colours please by opposition, and it is in the face they are most diversified, and the most opposed.

The reader would laugh perhaps, if I were to assert that the same thing which makes a fine evening, makes a fine face, (I mean as to the colour), and yet this, I believe, is very true.

The beauty of an evening sky about the setting of the sun, is owing to the variety of colours that are scattered along the face of the heavens. It is the fine red clouds, intermixed with white, and sometimes darker ones, with the azure bottom appearing here and there between them, which makes all that beautiful composition, that delights the eye so much and gives such serene pleasure to the heart. In the same manner if we consider some beautiful faces, we may observe, that it is much the same variety of colours, which gives them that pleasing look; so apt to attract the eye, and but too often to engage the heart.

For all this sort of beauty is resolvable into a proper variation of flesh-colour and red, with the clear blueness of the veins pleasingly intermixed about the temples and the going off of the cheeks, and set off by the shades of full eyebrows; and of the hair, when it falls in a proper manner round the face.

It is for much the same reason, that the best landscape painters have been generally observed to chuse the autumnal part of the year for their pieces, rather than the spring. They prefer the variety of shades and colours, though in their decline, to all their freshness and verdure in their infancy; and think all the charms and liveliness even of the Spring more than compensated by the choice, opposition, and richness of colours that appear, on almost every tree in the Autumn.

Though our judgment is so apt to be guided by some particular attachments (and that more perhaps in this part of beauty than any other) yet I am a good deal persuaded, that a complete brown beauty is really preferable to a perfect fair one; the bright brown giving a lustre to all other colours, a vivacity to the eyes, and a richness to the whole look which are sought in vain in the whitest and most transparent skins. Raphael's most charming Madonna is a brunette beauty; and his earlier Madonnas (I mean those of his middle style) are generally of a lighter and less pleasing complexion. All the best artists in the noblest age of painting, about Leo the tenth's time, used this deeper and richer kind of colouring; and I fear we might add, that the glaring tints introduced by Guido, contributed much toward the declension of that art; as the

enfeebling of the colours by Carlo Marat (or if you please by his followers) has since almost completed the fall of it in Italy,

I have but one thing more to mention, before I quit this head; that I should chuse to comprehend some things under this article of colour, which are not perhaps commonly meant by that name. As that seeming softness or silkiness of some skins; that Magdalen look * in some fine faces, after weeping; that brightness as well as tint of the hair; that lustre of health, which shines forth upon the features; that luminousness that appears in some eyes, and that fluid fire, or glistening in others, some of which are of a nature so much superior to the common beauties of colour, that they make it doubtful, whether they should not have been ranked under a higher class, and reserved for the expression of the Passions; but I willingly give every thing its due, and therefore mention them here, because I

* The look here meant is most frequently expressed by the best painters in their Magdalens, in which, if there were no tears on the face, it would appear by the humid redness of the skin, that she had been weeping extremely. There is a strong instance in the famous Magdalen of Le Brun, in several by Titian, in Italy; in speaking of one Rosalba did not exaggerate when she said, Elle pleure jusqu'aux bouts de doigts.

think even the most doubtful of them, belong partly to this head, as well as partly to the other.

Form takes the turn of each part, as well as the symmetry of the whole body, even to the turn of an eyebrow or the falling of the hair. The attitude while fixed ought to be reckoned under this article; by which I not only mean the posture of the person, but the position of each part, as the turning of the neck, the extending of the hand, the placing of a foot, and so on to the most minute particulars.

The general cause of beauty in the form or shape of both sexes, is a proportion or an union and harmony in all parts of the body.

The distinguishing character of beauty in the female form is delicacy and softness; in the male either apparent strength or agility.

The finest exemplar of the former is the Venus de Medici; and for the two latter the Hercules Farnese, and the Apollo Belvedere.

There is one thing, indeed, in the last of these figures which exceeds the bounds of our present enquiry; what I heard an Italian artist call *Il sovra humano*, and what we may call the transcendant or celestial. It is something distinct from all human beauty, and of a nature greatly superior to it; something that seems like an air of divinity, which is expressed,

or at least to be traced out in very few works of the artists, and of which scarce any of the poets have caught any ray in their descriptions, (or perhaps even in their imaginations) except Homer and Virgil among the antients, and our Shakespeare and Milton among the moderns.

The beauty of the mere human form is much superior to that of colour, partly for this reason, that when we observe the finest works of the artists at Rome, we feel the mind more struck and more charmed with the capital statues, than with the pictures of the greatest masters.

One of the Roman poets, speaking of a very handsome man, who was candidate for the prize in some of the public games, says that he was much admired by all the spectators at his first appearance, but that when he threw off his robes, and discovered the whole beauty of his shape, it quite extinguished the beauties they had before so much admired in his face.

I have often felt much the same effect in viewing the Venus de Medicis. If we observe the face only, it appears extremely beautiful; but if we consider all the other elegancies of her make, the beauty of her face becomes less striking, and is almost lost in such a multiplicity of charms.

Whoever would learn what makes the beauty

of each part of the human body, may find it laid down by Felibien; or may study it with more pleasure in the finest pictures and statues, and I am forced to have recourse to them so often, because in life we commonly see but a small part of the human body, most of it being^s either disguised or altered by dress.

ESSAY 75.

EXPRESSION.

(*Spence.*)

THE two other constituent parts of beauty, are expression and grace: the former of which is common to all persons and faces; the latter is to be met with but in very few.

By expression, I mean the expression of the passions; the turns and changes of the mind, so far as they are made visible to the naked eye, by our looks or gestures.

Though the mind appears, principally in the face, and attitudes of the head; yet every part almost of the human body, on some occasion or

other may become expressive: as the languishing hanging of the arm, or the vehement exertion of it; the pain expressed by the fingers of one of the sons in the famous group of Laocoon, and in the toes of the dying gladiator. But this again is often lost among us by our dress; and indeed is of the less concern, because the expression of the passions passes chiefly in the face, which are by good luck not yet concealed. The parts of the face in which the passions most frequently make their appearance are the eyes, and mouth, but from the eyes they diffuse themselves very strongly about the eyebrows; as in the other case, they appear often, in the parts all round the mouth.

Philosophers may dispute, as much as they please, about the seat of the soul: but wherever it resides, I am sure that it speaks in the eyes. I do not know whether I have not injured the eyebrows, in making them only dependents on the eye; for they, especially in lively faces, have a language of their own, and are extremely varied, according to the different sentiments and passions of the mind. I have sometimes observed a degree of displeasure in a lady's eyebrow, when she had address enough not to let it appear in her eyes; and at other times have discovered so much of her thoughts, in the line just

above her eyebrows, that she has been amazed how any body could tell what passed in her mind, and as she thought undiscovered by her face, so particularly and distinctly. Homer makes the eyebrows the seat of majesty, Virgil of dejection, Horace of modesty, and Juvenal of pride; and I question whether every one of the passions is not assigned by one or other of the poets to the same part.

Hitherto I have spoken only of the passions in general; we will now consider a little, which of them adds to beauty, and which of them takes from it. I believe I may say in general, that all the tender and kind passions add to beauty; and all the cruel and unkind ones add to deformity. And it is on this account that good nature may, very justly, be said to be "the best feature even in the finest face."

Mr. Pope has included the principal passion of each sort in two lines;

" Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling train;
" Hate, Fear and Grief, the family of Pain.

The former of which naturally give an additional lustre and enlivening to beauty; as the latter are too apt to fling a gloom over it. Yet in these and all the other passions, I do not know whether moderation may not be, in a great mea-

sure, the rule of their beauty; almost as far as moderation in actions is the rule of virtue. Thus an excessive joy may be too boisterous in the face to be pleasing; and a degree of grief in some faces and on some occasions may be extremely beautiful. Some degrees of anger, shame, surprise, fear, and concern are beautiful; but all excess is hurtful and ugly; as dulness, austerity, impudence, pride, affectation, malice, and envy.

The finest union of passion consists in a just mixture of modesty, sensibility, and sweetness; each of which when taken singly is pleasing; but when all are blended together in such a manner as either to enliven or correct each other, they give almost as much attraction, as the passions are capable of adding, to a very pretty face.

The prevailing passion in the Venus of Medici is modesty. It is expressed by each of her hands, in her looks, and in the turn of her head. And by the way, I question whether one of the chief reasons, why side faces please more than full ones, may not be from the former having more of the air of modesty than the latter. However that may be, this is certain, that the best artists usually chuse to give a side face, rather than a full one; in which attitude the turn of the neck

too has more beauty, and the passions more activity and force. Thus, as to hatred and affection in particular, the look that was formerly supposed to carry an infection with it from malignant eyes, was a slanting regard, like that which Milton gives to Satan when he is viewing the happiness of our first parents in Paradise,

Aside the Devil turn'd
For envy; yet with jealous eye malign,
Ey'd them *askance*.

The fascination also, or stroke of love, is most usually conveyed in a side glance.

It is owing to the great force of pleasingness which attends all the kinder passions, that lovers do not only seem, but are really more beautiful to each other, than to the rest of the world; because, when they are together, the most pleasing passions are frequently portrayed in their faces. There is in them (as a certain French writer well expresses it) "A soul upon their countenances," which does not appear when they are absent from each other; or even when they are together conversing with other persons that are indifferent to them, or rather lay a restraint upon their features.

Thus we see the preference which the beauty of the passions has over the colour and form;

and if any one was not thoroughly convinced of it, I should beg him to consider a little the following particulars, of which every body must have met with several instances.

There is a great deal of difference in the same face, as the person is in a better or worse humour, and a greater or less degree of liveliness. The best complexion, the finest features, and the exactest shape, without any thing of the mind expressed on the face, is as insipid and unmoving as the waxen figure of the fine Duchess of Richmond, in Westminster Abbey. A face without any good features, and with a very indifferent complexion, shall have a very taking air; from the sensibility of the eyes, the general good humoured turn of the look, and perhaps a little agreeable smile about the mouth. And these three things would perhaps account for the *J'ne sçai quoi*, or that inexplicable pleasingness of the face which is so often talked of, and so little understood; as the greater part, and perhaps all the rest of it, would fall under the next article, that of grace.

I once knew a very fine woman, who was much admired, and scarce ever loved. This was occasioned by a want of all the pleasing passions in her face, and an appearance of the displeasing ones, particularly those of pride and ill nature.

Nero, of old, seems to have had this unpleasing sort of handsomeness; the goodness of his features being overlaid by the ugliness of the passions which appeared on his face. The finest eyes in the world, with an excess of malice or rage in them, will grow as shocking as they are in that fine face of the Medusa, on the famous seal of the Strozzi family at Rome.

Thus, it is evident, that the passions can give beauty without the assistance of colour or form; and take it away, where they have united the most strongly to give it, and it was this which induced me to describe this part of beauty as so highly superior to the other two. This may help us to account for the justness of what Pliny asserts in speaking of the famous statue of Laocoon, and his two sons. He says it was the finest piece of art in Rome, and to be preferred to all the other statues and pictures of which they had so noble a collection in his time. It had no beauties of color to vie with the paintings; other statues, particularly the Apollo Belvedere and the Venus de Medici, were as finely proportioned; but the Laocoon had much greater variety of expression even than these fine statues; and, on that account alone, it must have been preferable to them, and to all the rest.

Before I conclude I will just advert to two

things which I mentioned before; that the chief beauty of the passions is moderation, and that the part in which they appear most strongly is in the eyes. There love holds all his tenderest language: there virtue commands, modesty charms, joy enlivens, sorrow engages, and inclination fires the hearts of the beholders. There even fear and anger and confusion can be charming. But all these to be charming, must be kept within their due bounds and limits; for too sullen an appearance of virtue, a violent swell of passion, a rustic and over-whelming modesty, a deep sadness, a too wild and impetuous joy, become all either oppressive or disagreeable.

ESSAY 76.

GRACE.

(Spence.)

THE last finishing and noblest part of beauty is grace, of which every body is accustomed to speak as a thing inexplicable; and in a great measure, I believe it is so. We know that the soul is, but we scarcely know what it is; every judge of beauty can point out grace; but no one has ever yet defined it.

Grace often depends upon very little incidents in a fine face; and in actions it consists more in the manner of doing things, than in the things themselves. It perpetually varies its appearances, and is therefore much more difficult to be considered than any thing fixed and steady. While we look upon one grace, it steals from under the eye of the observer, and is succeeded perhaps by another, that flits away as soon and as imperceptibly.

On this account grace is better to be studied

in Guido's, Corregio's, and Raphael's pictures than in real life. Thus for instance, if I wanted to discover what makes anger graceful, in a set of features full of the greatest *sweetness*; I would rather endeavour to find it out in Guido's St. Michael, than in Mrs. P.'s face, if that ever had any anger in it; because in the pictured angel, we have full leisure to consider it; but in the living one, it would be too transient and changeable to be the subject of any steady observation.

But though we cannot describe what grace is, we may point out the parts and things in which it is most apt to appear.

The chief residence of grace is about the mouth; though at times it may visit every limb or part of the body. In the same manner as the eyes are the chief seat where the beauty of the passions is displayed. In a very graceful face, by which I do not so much mean a majestic as a soft pleasing one, there is now and then (for no part of beauty is either so engaging or so uncommon) a certain deliciousness that almost always lives about the mouth, in something not quite to be called a smile, but rather an approach towards one, which gently varies about the different lines like a little fluttering Cupid; and perhaps sometimes discovers a little dimple, that

after just lightening upon us, disappears and appears again by fits. This I take to be one of the most pleasing sorts of grace; but it is easier conceived than described.

The grace of attitude may belong to the disposition of each part, as well as to the carriage or disposition of the whole body; but how much more it belongs to the head, than to any other part, may be seen in the pieces of the most celebrated painters, and particularly in those of Guido, who has been rather too lavish in bestowing this beauty on almost all his fine women; whereas nature has given it in so high a degree to very few.

The turns of the neck are extremely capable of graces; and are easy to be observed, and very difficult to be accounted for.

How much of this grace may belong to the arms and feet, as well as to the neck and head, may be seen in dancing. But it is not only in genteel motions that a beautiful woman will be graceful; and Ovid, who was so great a master in all the parts of beauty, had good reason for saying, that when Venus imitated the hobbling gait of her husband, her very lameness had a deal of prettiness and grace in it. "Every motion of a graceful woman," says Tibullus, "is full of grace." She designs nothing by it perhaps,

and may not even be sensible of it herself, and indeed she should not be so too much ; for the moment that any gesture or action appears to be affected, it ceases to be graceful. Horace and Virgil seem to extend grace so far as to the flowing of the hair ; and Tibullus to the dress of his mistress ; but then he assigns it more to her manner of putting on and appearing in whatever she wears, than to the dress itself.

There are two very distinct and as it were opposite sorts of grace, the majestic and the familiar. I should have called the latter by the name of pleasing, had I not been afraid of a tautology ; for grace is pleasingness itself. The former chiefly belongs to fine women, the latter to pretty women ; that is more commanding, this more delightful and engaging. The Grecian painters and sculptors used to express the former most strongly in the looks and attitudes of their Minervas ; the latter in those of Venus.

Xenophon in his *Choice of Hercules* (or at least the excellent translator of that piece) has made just the same distinction in the personages of Wisdom and Pleasure ; the former of which he describes as advancing to the young hero with the majestic grace, and the latter with the familiar.

“ Graceful, yet each with different grace they move,
 “ This striking sacred awe, that winning softer love.”

No poet I have ever read seems to understand this part of beauty so well as our own Milton. He speaks of these two sorts of grace very distinctly, and gives the majestic to Adam, and both the familiar and majestic to Eve, but the latter in a less degree than the former.

Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
 Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
 In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all;
 And worthy seem'd. For in their looks divine
 The image of their glorious Maker shone:
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure;
 Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd;
 Whence true authority in them. Though both
 Not equal, as their sex not equal, seem'd;
 For contemplation he, and valour, form'd;
 For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.

Parad. Lost. B. 4. 298.

I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a plantain; yet methought less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
 Than that smooth wat'ry image.

Ib. v. 480.

Her heav'nly form,
 Angelic, but more soft and feminine;
 Her graceful innocence; her ev'ry air
 Of gesture, or least action—

B. 9. 481.

Grace was in all her steps ; heav'n in her eye,
In ev'ry gesture dignity and love. B. 8. 489.

Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms.
Ib. 223.

Though grace is so difficult to be accounted for in general ; yet I have observed two particular things which are universally connected with it. The first is, there is no grace without motion, by which I mean without some gentle or pleasing motion, either of the whole body, or of some limb, at least of some feature. It may be hence, that Lord Bacon, and perhaps Horace, call grace by the name of decent motion, just as if they were equivalent terms. Virgil in one place points out the majesty of Juno, and in another the graceful air of Apollo, by only saying that they moved ; and possibly he means no more, when he makes the motion of Venus * the principal thing by which Æneas discovers her under all her disguise, though the commentators as usual would fain find out a more dark and mysterious meaning.

All the best statues are represented as in some

* Et vera incessu patuit Dea. Æneid. l. 1. p. 406.

And by her *graceful walk* the queen of love is known.
Dryden.

action or motion; and the most graceful one in the world, the Apollo Belvedere, is so much so, that when seen at a little distance, in particular views, we are almost apt to imagine that he is actually going to move on towards us.

All graceful heads, even in the portraits of the best painters, are in motion, and very strongly in those of Guido in particular, which are all either casting their looks up towards heaven, or down towards the ground, or side-way as regarding some object. A head that is quite inactive, and flung flat upon the canvas, like the faces on medals, after the fall of the Roman empire, or the gothic heads before the revival of the arts, are so far from having any grace that they have no appearance of life.

The second observation is, "there can be no "grace with impropriety," or in other words nothing can be graceful, which is not adapted to the character of the person. The graces of a little lively beauty would become ungraceful in a character of majesty; as the majestic airs of an empress would quite destroy the prettiness of the former. The vivacity that adds a grace to beauty in youth, would give an additional deformity to old age; and the very same airs, which would be charming on some occasions, may be

quite shocking when extremely mis-timed, or extremely mis-placed.

The inseparable union of propriety and grace seems to have been the general sense of mankind; as we may guess from the languages of several nations, in which some words that answer to our *proper* or *becoming*, are used indifferently for *beautiful* or *graceful**. And yet I cannot think as some are inclined to do, that grace consists entirely in propriety; because propriety is a thing easy enough to be understood, and grace, after all we can say about it, very difficult. Propriety, therefore, and grace, are no more one and the same thing, than grace and motion are. It is true, it cannot subsist without either; but then there seems to be something else, what I cannot explain, and what I do not know that any body else has ever explained, which enters into the composition, and which possibly may give its greatest force and power of pleasing.

Whatever are the causes of it, this is certain, that grace is the chief of all the constituent parts of beauty, and so much so that it seems to be the only one, which is absolutely and universally admired. All the rest are only relative.

* Among the Greeks the words *πρεπον* and *καλον*, among the Romans, *pulchrum*, *decens* and *decorum*.

One likes a brunette beauty better than a fair one; I may love a little woman and you a large one; a person of a mild temper will be fond of the milder passions in the face; and one of a bolder cast may chuse more vivacity and the expression of more vigorous passions. But grace is found in few, and is pleasing to all. Like poetry, grace must be born with a person, and is never to be wholly acquired by art.

The most celebrated of all the antient painters was Apelles; and the most celebrated of all the moderns Raphael; and it is remarkable, that the distinguishing character of each was grace. Indeed that alone was sufficient to have given them so high a pre-eminence over all their other competitors.

Grace has nothing to do with the lowest part of beauty or colour, very little with shape, and very much with the passions; for it is she who gives their highest zest, and the most pleasing effect to their expression. All the other parts of beauty are pleasing in some degrees; but grace is pleasingness itself; and the Romans in general seem to have had this notion of it, as may be inferred from the original import of the names which they employed to signify this part of beauty*.

* *Gratia* from *gratus*, or pleasing; and *decor* from *decens*, or becoming.

The Greeks, as well as the Romans, must have been of this opinion, when in their mythology they made the graces the constant attendants of Venus, or the cause of love, and in fact, there is nothing causes love so generally, and so irresistibly, as grace. It is like the cestus of the goddess, which was supposed to comprehend every thing winning and engaging ; and above all to draw the heart to love by a secret and inexplicable force like that of some magic charm.

ESSAY 77.

A REPUBLICAN

(Butler.)

IS a civil fanatic, an Utopian senator: and as all fanatics cheat themselves with words, mistaking them for things; so he does with the false sense of liberty. He builds governments in the air, and shapes them with his fancy, as men do figures in the clouds. He is a great lover of his own imaginations, which he calls his country; and is very much for obedience to his own sense, but not for others.

He is a nominal politician, a faithful and loyal subject to notional governments, but an obstinate rebel to the real. He dreams of a republic waking; but as all dreams are disproportionate and imperfect, so are his conceptions of it; for he has not art enough to understand the difference between speculation and practice. He is so much a fool, that he is like the dog in the fable,

he loses his real liberty to enjoy the shadow ; and the more he studies to dislike the government, under which he lives, the farther he is off his real freedom.

While he is modeling governments he forgets that no government was ever made by model ; for they are not built as houses are, but grow as trees do ; and as some trees thrive best in some soil, some in another, so do governments ; though none equally in any, but all generally, where they are most naturally produced : and, therefore, it is probable, that the state of Venice would be no more the same in any other country, if introduced, than the trade of glass making*. To avoid this, he calculates his model to the elevation of a particular clime, but with the same success (if put in practice) as almanack makers do, to serve only for a year ; and his predictions of success would be according, but nothing so certain as their fair and foul weather. He has not judgment enough to observe, that all governments are merely Utopian, which have no territory but in books, nor subjects but in hot heads and strong fancies ; that Plato's republic is much wiser than any of his size, and yet it has been a long while in the world quite out of employment, and is like to continue so, till his great year,

* Venice was celebrated for its manufacture of glass.

a sad discouragement to a state projector. But his republic is like to have a harder province; for without a previous rebellion nothing is to be expected, and then that is to prosper, or else all is lost; next the nation is to fall into ruin and confusion, just in the order which he has designed, otherwise it will be to no purpose. Then nothing is to intervene; but after so many alterations the *same* persons are to out-live all, and continue still in the *same* mind, especially those in power, and their interests to be the very *same* as they are at present, else nothing is to be done. After all this, if nothing else interpose but the will of God, a model of a republic may, if the times will bear it, be proposed; and if it be thought to go no further, the proposers shall be thanked, and be told, that it shall be taken into consideration, or is so already; and then things will remain as they are now. And this is all the possible *rotation* our speculative state botcher can in reason promise to himself, to make those of his party who have any sense, to believe. He has a fancy (for it is no more) to a commonwealth, because he has seen the picture of it; which no matter whether it be true or false, it pleases his humour, though it be nothing but a great corporation: for it is but calling the mayors of a good town, consuls; the aldermen, senators;

the churchwardens, ædiles; and the parson Pontifex Maximus, and lo! the thing is done. Most persons of this sort are haranguers, who will hold any argument, rather than their tongues, and like this government more than any other, because every man has a voice, and the greatest orators prove the ablest statesmen.

Our republican has a mind to be a piece of a *prince*, though his own whole share of *highness* will not amount to the value of a pepper-corn yearly if it be demanded: Howsoever it will serve to entitle him to a share in the government to which he aspires, and which he considers himself as able to manage, though that be an ill sign; for commonly those who desire it most, are most unfit.

Of all state fanatics he is the most foolish, and furthest off from any of his ends, unless it be the gallows.

If he could but find out a way to hold intelligence with the subtle inhabitants of the air, he might in probability establish his government among them, much sooner than here, where so many experiments have been made to no purpose.

Democracy is but the effect of a crazy brain; it is like the intelligible world, where the models and ideas of all things are, but no things; and

it will never go any further. Republicans are state recusants, politic nonconformists, who from tenderness of humour cannot comply with the government under which they live, nor be obedient to the laws of the land with a safe fancy. They were all freeborn in *fairy land*, but changed in the cradle; and so not being natives here, the air of the government does not agree with them. They are silenced ministers of state, who hold forth sedition in conventicles, and spread new governments erroneous both in doctrine and discipline. They make governments, as children do dirt pies, only to busy and please themselves, but to no purpose.

They derive the pedigree of government from universals, that produce nothing; and suppose the right of it to be only in those who are incapable of using it, that is ALL men, which is the same as NO man; for that which is every where is no where.

A *republican* will undertake to prevent civil wars by proving that mankind were born to nothing else, and reduce them to subjection and obedience by maintaining that nature made them all EQUAL. He pretends to secure the right of princes by proving that whosoever can wrest their power from them has a right to it, and persuade them and their subjects to observe imagi-

nary contracts, because invalid as soon as made. He has as wise disputes about the original of governments, as the Rosicrucians have about the beginning of the world; when it would puzzle both him and them to find out, how the first hammer was made; but he would fain have governments made by laws, because laws are made by them, as if the child begot the parent.

In fine he is a state-quack, that mounts his stage in some obscure nook, and vapours about his cures on the body politic; when all his skill will not serve to cure his own itch of novelty and vain-glory. All his governors are ideots, and will never be admitted to the administration of their own estates, nor come to years of discretion*.

* This portrait of a Republican in this essay, may appear to many an exaggerated picture; but it must be considered that Butler had too deeply experienced the fatal mischiefs of that democracy, which after overthrowing the throne and the altar, had ended in the despotism of Cromwell, not to paint them as strongly as he felt them. Dryden, also, who witnessed the triumph of the same republican faction, represents it in scarcely less glowing colours, though in a different light. The remarks of two such acute and discerning men, justified by recent experience, cannot fail of being read with interest and advantage. And, therefore, we have inserted them together.

ESSAY 78.

EVILS OF A REPUBLIC.

(Dryden.)

WE have the happiness to be born under an equal and well poised government, which has all the advantages of liberty beyond a commonwealth, and all the marks of kingly sovereignty without the danger of a tyranny.

Both my nature, as I am an Englishman, and my reason, as I am a man, have bred in me a loathing to that specious name of a republic; that mock appearance of liberty, where all who have not part in the government are slaves; and slaves they are of a viler note than such as are subjects to an absolute dominion. For no Christian monarchy is so absolute, as not to be circumscribed with laws; but when the executive power is in the law-makers, there is no further check upon them, and the people must suffer

whether the exhibition of human distress is likely to afford the mind more entertainment than that of human absurdity?

Comedy is defined by Aristotle to be a picture of the frailties of the lower part of mankind, to distinguish it from tragedy, which is an exhibition of the misfortunes of the great. When comedy, therefore, ascends to produce the characters of princes or generals upon the stage, it is out of its walk, since low and middle life are entirely its object. The principal question is, therefore, whether in describing low or middle life, an exhibition of its follies be not preferable to a detail of its calamities? Or in other words which deserves the preference? The weeping sentimental comedy, so much in fashion at present (1773), or the laughing and even low comedy, which seems to have been last exhibited by Vanbrugh and Cibber?

If we apply to authorities, all the great masters in the dramatic art have but one opinion. Their rule is, that as tragedy displays the calamities of the great, so comedy should excite our laughter, by ridiculously exhibiting the follies of the lower part of mankind. Boileau, one of the best of modern critics, asserts that comedy will not admit of tragic distress.

“ Le comique, ennemi des soupirs et des pleurs,
“ N’admit point dans ses vers de tragiques douleurs.”

Nor is the rule without the strongest foundation in nature, as the distresses of the mean by no means affect us so strongly as the calamities of the great. When tragedy exhibits to us some great man fallen from his height and struggling with want and adversity, we feel his situation in the same manner as we suppose that he himself must feel, and our pity is increased in proportion to the height from which he fell. On the contrary we do not so strongly sympathise with one born in humbler circumstances, and encountering accidental distress: so that while we melt for Belisarius, we scarcely give halfpence to the beggar, who accosts us in the street. The one has our pity; the other our contempt. Distress, therefore, is the proper object of tragedy, since the great excite pity by their fall; but not equally so of comedy, since the actors employed in it are originally so mean, that they sink but little by their fall.

Since the first origin of the stage, tragedy and comedy have run in distinct channels, and never till of late encroached upon the provinces of each other. Terence, who seems to have made the nearest approaches, always judiciously stops short, before he comes to the downright pathetic :

and yet he is even reproached by Cæsar for wanting the *vis comica*. All the other comic writers of antiquity aim only at rendering folly or vice ridiculous, but seldom exalt their characters into buskined pomp, or make what Voltaire humourously calls a tradesman's tragedy.

Yet notwithstanding this weight of authority and the universal practice of former ages, a new species of dramatic composition has been introduced under the name of *sentimental comedy*, in which the virtues of private life are exhibited rather than the vices exposed, and the distresses rather than the faults of mankind make an interest in the piece. These comedies have had of late great success, perhaps from their novelty, and also from their flattering every man in his favourite foible. In these plays almost all the characters are good, and exceedingly generous; they are lavish enough of their *tin* money on the stage; and though they want humour, have abundance of sentiment and feeling. If they happen to have faults or foibles, the spectator is taught not only to pardon but to applaud them in consideration of the goodness of their hearts; so that folly instead of being ridiculed is commended, and the comedy aims at touching our passions, without the power of being truly pathetic. In this manner we are likely to lose one

great source of entertainment on the stage; for while the comic poet is invading the province of the tragic muse, he leaves her lovely sister quite neglected; of this however he is no way solicitous, as he measures his fame by his profits.

But it will be said that the theatre is formed to amuse mankind, and that it matters little, if this end be answered, by what means it is obtained. If mankind find delight in weeping at a comedy, it would be cruel to abridge them in that or any other innocent pleasure. If those pieces are denied the name of comedies, yet call them by any other name, and if they are delightful they are good. Their success, it will be said, is a mark of their merit, and it is only abridging our happiness to deny us an inlet to amusement.

These objections, however, are rather specious than solid. It is true, that amusement is a great object of the theatre; and it will be allowed, that these sentimental pieces do often amuse us; but the question is whether the true comedy would not amuse us more? The question is whether a character supported through a piece with its ridicule still attending, would not give us more delight than this species of bastard tragedy, which is only applauded because it is new?

A friend of mine who was sitting unmoved at

one of these sentimental pieces, was asked how he could be so indifferent. "Why truly," says he, "as the hero is but a tradesman, it is indifferent to me whether he be turned out of his counting house on Fish Street Hill, since he will still have enough left to open shop in St. Giles's."

The other objection is as ill grounded; for though we should give these pieces another name, it will not mend their efficacy. It will continue a kind of mullish production, with all the defects of its opposite parents and marked with sterility. If we are permitted to make comedy weep, we have an equal right to make tragedy laugh, and to set down in blank verse, the jests and repartees of all the attendants in a funeral procession.

But there is one argument in favour of *sentimental* comedy which will keep it on the stage, in spite of all that can be said against it. It is of all others the most easily written. Those abilities, that can hammer out a novel, are fully sufficient for the production of a *sentimental* comedy. It is only sufficient to raise the characters a little; to deck out the hero with a ribband or give the heroine a title; then to put an insipid dialogue, without character or humour, into their mouths, give them mighty good hearts, very fine cloaths, furnish a new set of scenes, make a pa-

thetic scene or two, with a sprinkling of tender melancholy conversation through the whole, and there is no doubt, but all the ladies will cry, and all the gentlemen applaud.

Humour, at present, seems to be departing from the stage; and it will soon happen that our comic players will have nothing left but a fine coat and a song. It depends upon the audience whether they will actually drive those poor merry creatures from the stage, or sit at a play as gloomy as at the tabernacle. It is not easy to recover an art when once lost; and it will be but a just punishment, that when by our being too fastidious we have banished humour from the stage, we should ourselves be deprived of the art of laughing.

ESSAY 80.

LAZINESS.

(Lord Shaftesbury.)

THERE is no one of ever so little understanding in what belongs to a human constitution, who knows not, that without action, motion, and employment, the body languishes and is oppressed : its nourishment runs to disease ; the spirits employed abroad help to consume the parts within ; and nature, as it were, preys upon herself. For although an inclination to ease and moderate rest from action, be as natural and useful to us as the inclination we have towards sleep ; yet an excessive love of rest, and a contracted aversion to employment, must be a disease in the mind equal to that of a lethargy in the body.

How necessary indeed action and exercise are to the body, may be judged by the difference we find between those constitutions, which are accustomed, and those which are wholly strangers to exercise ; and by the different healths and complexions which labour creates, in comparison

with that habit of body, we see consequent to an indulgent state of indolence and rest.

Nor is the lazy habit ruinous to the body only. The languishing disease corrupts all the enjoyments of a vigorous and healthy sense, and carries its infections into the mind. For, however the body may for a while hold out, it is impossible that the mind, in which the distemper is seated, can escape without an immediate affliction and disorder. The habit begets a tediousness and anxiety which influences the whole temper, and converts the unnatural rest into an unhappy sort of activity, ill-humour and spleen.

As in the body, when no labour or natural exercise is used, the spirits which want their due employment turn against the constitution, and find work for themselves in a destructive way; so in a soul or mind unexercised, and which languishes for want of proper action and occupation, the thoughts and affections being obstructed in their due course, and deprived of their natural energy, raise disquiet, and foment a tormenting kind of agitation. Hence the temper becomes more impotent in passion, more incapable of real moderation, and like prepared fuel readily takes fire by the least spark.

While some part of mankind are by necessity confined to labour, others are provided with

abundance of all things, by the pains and labours of inferiors. Now if among the superior and easy sort, there be not something of fit and proper employment raised in the room of what is wanting in common labour and toil; if instead of an application to any sort of work, such as has a good and honest end in society, (as letters, sciences, arts, husbandry, public affairs, economy, or the like,) there be a thorough neglect of all duty or employment; a settled idleness, supineness and inactivity, this of necessity must occasion a relaxed and dissolute state: it must produce a total disorder in the passions, and create the strangest irregularities; which are scarcely to be met with among those who are taken up in honest and due employment, and have been well inured to it from their very youth.

ESSAY 81.

THE AFFECTED OR FORMAL MAN

(Butler.)

IS a piece of clockwork, that moves only as it is wound up and set, and not like a voluntary agent. He is a mathematical body, nothing but a point, a line, a superficies, and perfectly abstract from matter. He walks as stiffly and uprightly as a dog that is taught to go on his hinder legs, and carries his hands as the other does his fore feet. He is very ceremonious and full of respect to himself, for no man uses those formalities, that does not expect the same from others. All his actions and words are set down in so exact a method, that an indifferent accountant may cast him up to a farthing. He does every thing by rule, as if it were in a course of diet, and did not eat, but take a dose of meat and drink, and not walk but proceed, not go but march.

He draws up himself with admirable conduct in a very regular and well ordered body. All

his business and affairs are junctures and transactions; and when he speaks with a man he gives him audience. He does not carry, but marshal himself; and no one member of his body politic takes place of another without due right of precedence. He does all things by rules of proportion, and never gives himself the freedom to manage his gloves or his watch in an irregular and arbitrary way; but is always ready to render an account of his demeanour to the most strict and severe disquisition.

He sets his face as if it were cast in plaster, and never admits of any commotion in his countenance, nor so much as the innovation of a smile without serious and mature deliberation; but he preserves his looks in a judicial way, according as they have always been established.

ESSAY 82.

SOCRATES.

(Melmoth.)

IT is uncertain upon what occasion Socrates, the patriarch of philosophy, was distinguished by the Oracle with the honourable designation of the "Wisest of men." Diogenes Laertius seems to intimate, that it was conferred upon him on account of that practical wisdom which so strongly marked every part of his exemplary conduct, particularly in the equanimity and moderation with which he bore the severe trials to which his patience was exposed.

But Socrates himself, as we learn from Cicero in another part of his writings, assigned a different and more probable reason, attributing this high encomium to his just discernment of the limits of the human mind, and confining

his philosophical researches to the proper objects of human understanding: the chief attainment whereof could rise no higher, he said, than to know how little can be known.

It was, indeed, one of the principal labours of this noble moralist to subue the vanity of pretended science; to call down philosophy from those ideal flights in which she had hitherto wasted her strength and powers; and bring her home to her proper office, the moral improvement of human life.

The truth is, the preceding sages, Pythagoras alone perhaps excepted, had little concerned themselves with establishing the important principles of ethics; their studies being chiefly directed to physiological inquiries. Accordingly each philosopher endeavoured to distinguish himself by some new theory; and with all the "rash dexterity of wit" employed his talents in constructing worlds, and disclosing the imaginary secret by which nature performed all her wonderful operations.

Socrates considered these specious reveries of misapplied genius as so many philosophical romances, and with great force of ridicule exposed them to the contempt they deserved. The philosophy which he himself taught, was altogether of a different cast: it turned upon a

subject, (to borrow the poet's expression,) "quod
"magis ad nos pertinet et nescire malum est *;"
as it investigated the principles of moral science,
and pointed out the paths that lead to present
and future felicity.

* More interesting to mankind because to be ignorant of it is an evil.

ESSAY 83.

FIRMNESS IN ADVERSITY*.

(Lord Bolingbroke.)

IGNOMINY can take no hold on virtue, for virtue is in every condition the same, and challenges the same respect. We applaud the world when she prospers; and when she falls into adversity, we applaud her, like the temples of the gods, she is venerable even in her ruins. After this must it not appear a degree of madness, to defer one moment acquiring the only arms capable of defending us against all attacks, to which at every moment we are exposed? Our being miserable, or not miserable, when we fall into misfortunes, depends upon the manner in which we have enjoyed prosperity. If we have applied ourselves betimes to the study of

* In the original these remarks are applied to Exile; but we have substituted the word Adversity as of more general signification.

wisdom, and to the practice of virtue, then evils become indifferent; but if we have neglected to do so, they become necessary. In one case they are evils; and in the other remedies for greater evils than themselves.

Zeno rejoiced that a shipwreck had thrown him on the Athenian coast; and he owed to the loss of his fortune the acquisition which he made of virtue, of wisdom, of immortality. Prosperity often irritates our chronic distempers, and leaves us no hopes of finding any specific but in adversity. In such cases the evils we suffer are like rough medicines applied to inveterate diseases. What Anacharsis said of the vine, may aptly enough be said of prosperity. She bears the grapes of drunkenness, of pleasure, and of sorrow; and happy is it if the last can cure the mischief which the former work. When afflictions fail to have their due effect, then the case is desperate. They are the last remedy which indulgent Providence uses; and if they fail, we must languish and die in misery and contempt. Vain men! How seldom do we know what to wish or pray for. When we pray against misfortunes, and when we fear them most, we want them most. It was for this reason that Pythagoras forbade his disciples to ask any thing in particular of God. The shortest and the best prayer

we can address to him who knows our wants, and our ignorance in asking, is: "Thy will be done."

Tully says, in some part of his works, that, as happiness is the object of all philosophy, so the disputes among philosophers arise from their different notions of the sovereign good. Reconcile them in that point, you reconcile them in the rest. The school of Zeno placed this sovereign good in naked virtue, and wound the principle up to an extreme beyond the pitch of nature and truth. A spirit of opposition to another doctrine, which grew into great vogue when Zeno flourished, might occasion this excess. Epicurus placed the sovereign good in pleasure. Aristotle took a middle way, or explained himself better, and placed happiness in the joint advantages of the mind, of the body, and of fortune. They are reasonably joined; but certain it is, that they must not be placed on an equal foot. We can much better bear the privation of fortune than the others; and poverty itself, of which mankind is so afraid,

"Per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes."

is surely preferable to madness or the stone, though Chrysippus thought it better to live mad, than not to live.

If adversity, therefore, by taking from us the

advantages of fortune, cannot take from us the more valuable advantages of the mind and the body, when we have them; and if it is able to restore us to them when we have lost them, adversity is a very slight misfortune to those who are already under the dominion of reason, and a very great blessing to those who are still plunged in vices which ruin the health both of body and mind. It is to be wished for, in favour of such as these, and to be feared by none. If we are in this case, let us second the designs of Providence in our favour, and make some amends for neglecting former opportunities by not letting slip the last.

“Si nolis sanus, curre hydropicus.”

We may shorten the evils which we might have prevented; and as we get the better of our disorderly passions, and vicious habits, we shall feel our anxiety diminish in proportion.

All the approaches to virtue are comfortable. With how much joy will the man, who improves his misfortunes in this manner, discover that those evils which he attributed to any particular species of adversity, sprung from his vanity and folly, and vanish with them? He will see, that in his former temper of mind, he resembled the effeminate prince who could drink no water but that of

the river Choaspe; or the simple queen in one of the tragedies of Euripides, who complained bitterly, that she had not lighted the nuptial torch, and that the river Ismenus had not furnished the water at her son's wedding. Seeing his former state in this ridiculous light, he will labour on with pleasure towards another, as contrary as possible to it; and when he arrives there, he will be convinced by the strongest of all proofs, that he was unfortunate because he was vicious.

These are some of those reflections which may serve to fortify the mind under the misfortunes of life, which it is every man's interest to prepare for, because they are common to all: I say they are common to all; because even they who escape them are equally exposed to them. The darts of adverse fortune are always levelled at our heads. Some reach us, some graze against us, and fly to wound our neighbours.

Let us therefore impose an equal temper on our minds, and pay without murmuring the tribute which we owe to humanity. The winter brings cold, and we must freeze. The summer returns with heat, and we must melt. The inclemency of the air disorders our health, and we must be sick. Here we are exposed to wild beasts, and there to men more savage than the beasts; and if we escape the inconveniences and

dangers of the air and the earth, there are perils by water, and perils by fire.

This established course of things it is not in our power to change; but it is in our power to assume such a greatness of mind as becomes wise and virtuous men; as may enable us to encounter the accidents of life with fortitude, and conform ourselves to the order of nature, who governs her great kingdom, the world, by continual mutations. Let us submit to this order; let us be persuaded that whatever does happen ought to happen, and never be so foolish as to expostulate with nature. The best resolution we can take is to suffer what we cannot alter, and to pursue without repining, the road which Providence, who directs every thing, has marked out to us; for it is not enough to follow, and he is but a bad soldier who sighs, and marches on with reluctancy. We must receive the orders with spirit and cheerfulness, and not endeavour to slink out of the post which is assigned us in this beautiful disposition of things, whereof even our sufferings make a necessary part.

Let us address ourselves to God who governs all, as Cleanthes did in those admirable verses, which are going to lose part of their grace and energy in my translation of them.

Parent of Nature ! Master of the world !
Where'er thy providence directs, behold

My steps with chearful resignation turn.
Fate leads the willing, drags the backward on,
Why should I grieve, when grieving I must bear ?
Or take with guilt, what guiltless I might share ?

Thus let us speak, and thus let us act. Resignation to the will of God is true magnanimity. But the sure mark of a pusillanimous and base spirit, is to struggle against, to censure the order of Providence, and instead of mending our own conduct, to set up for correcting that of our Maker.

ESSAY 84.

WEARINESS OF LIFE.

(Melmoth.)

TO learn to accommodate our taste to that portion of happiness which Providence has set before us, is of all the lessons of philosophy surely the most necessary. High and exquisite gratifications are not consistent with the appointed lot of human nature; and perhaps, if we would fully enjoy the relish of our being, we should rather consider the miseries we escape, than too nicely examine the intrinsic worth of the happiness we possess. It is, at least, the business of true wisdom to bring together every circumstance, which may light up a flame of cheerfulness in the mind: and though we must be insensible if it should perpetually burn with the same unvaried brightness; yet prudence should preserve it as a sacred fire, which is never to be totally extinguished.

I am persuaded, that a disgust of life is frequently indulged out of a principle of mere vanity. It is esteemed as a mark of uncommon refinement, and as placing us above the ordinary level of our species, to seem superior to the vulgar feelings of happiness. True good sense, however, most certainly consists not in despising, but in managing, our stock of life to the best advantage; as a cheerful acquiescence in the measures of Providence is a strong symptom of a well-constituted mind. Self-weariness ever attends folly; and to condemn our being is the greatest and indeed the peculiar infirmity of human nature. It is a noble sentiment which Tully puts into the mouth of Cato the Censor, in his treatise upon old age: "Non lubet mihi, (says the venerable Roman,) "deplorare vitam, quod multi et ii
 "docti, sæpe fecerunt, neque me vixisse pœnitet;
 "quoniam et vixi ut non frustra me natum existem *."

It is in the power, indeed, of but a very small proportion of mankind, to act the same glorious

* "I mean not in imitation of some very considerable philosophers, to represent the condition of human nature as a subject of just lamentation. On the contrary, I am far from regretting that life was bestowed on me; as I have the satisfaction to think that I have employed it in such a manner as not to have been born in vain."

part that afforded such high satisfaction to this distinguished patriot: but the number is yet far more inconsiderable of those, who cannot, in any station, secure to themselves a sufficient fund of complacency to render life justly valuable.

Who is it that is placed out of the reach of the highest of all gratifications, those of the generous affections? and who cannot provide for his own happiness by contributing to the welfare of others? As this disease of the mind generally breaks out with more violence in those who are supposed to be endowed with a greater delicacy of taste and reason, than is the usual allotment of their fellow creatures; may we not ask them, whether there is any satiety in the pursuits of useful knowledge? or if we can ever be weary of benefiting mankind? Will not the fine arts convey a lasting peace to the mind? or can there be wanting a pleasurable employment so long as there remains one advantageous truth to be discovered or confirmed?

To complain that life has no joys, while there is a single creature whom we can relieve by our bounty, assist by our counsels, or enliven by our presence, is to lament the loss of that which we possess, and is just as rational as to die of thirst with the cup in our hands. But the misfortune is, when a man is settled into a habit

of receiving all his pleasures from the mere selfish indulgences; he wears out of his mind the relish of every nobler enjoyment, at the same time that his powers of the sensual kind are growing more languid by each repetition. It is no wonder, therefore, that he should fill up the measure of his gratifications, long before he has completed the circle of his duration; and either wretchedly sit down the remainder of his days in discontent, or vainly throw them up in despair.

ESSAY 85.

ON CONVERSATION.

(Fielding.)

THE art of conversation is the art of pleasing or doing good to one another ; and it is this habit which gives it all its value. And as man's being a social animal presupposes a natural desire or tendency this way, it will follow, that we can fail in attaining this truly desirable end from ignorance only in the means ; and how general this ignorance is may be with some probability inferred from our want of even a word to express this art. That which comes the nearest to it, and by which perhaps we would sometimes intend it, being so horribly and barbarously corrupted, that it contains at present scarce a simple ingredient of what it seems originally to have been designed to express.

The word I mean is Good Breeding ; a word I apprehend, not at first confined to externals,

much less to any particular dress or attitude of the body, nor were the qualifications expressed by it to be furnished by a milliner, a tailor, or a perriwig maker; no, nor even by a dancing master himself. According to the idea I myself conceive from this word, I should not have scrupled to call Socrates a well bred man, though I believe he was very little instructed by any of the persons I have before enumerated. In short, by good breeding, (notwithstanding the corrupt use of the word in a very different sense,) I mean the art of pleasing, or contributing as much as possible to the ease and happiness of those with whom we converse. I shall contend, therefore, no longer on this head; for while my reader closely conceives the sense in which I use this word, it will not be very material whether I am right or wrong in its original acceptation.

Good breeding, then, or the art of pleasing in conversation, is expressed two different ways, viz. in our actions and our words; and in our conduct in both may be reduced to that concise comprehensive rule in scripture, "Do unto all men as you would they should do unto you."

As this good breeding is the art of pleasing, it will be first necessary, with the utmost caution, to avoid hurting or giving any offence to those with whom we converse. And here we are

surely to shun any kind of actual disrespect, or affront to their persons, by insolence, which is the severest attack that can be made on the pride of man, and of which Florus seems to have no inadequate opinion, when speaking of the second Tarquin he says, "*In omnes superbîa (qua crudelitate gravior est BONIS) grassatus.*" He trod on all with **INSOLENCE**, which sits heavier on men of great minds than cruelty itself.

If there is any temper, which more than all others disqualifies a man for society, it is this insolence or haughtiness, which blinding him to his own imperfections, and giving him a hawk's quick-sightedness to those of others, raises in him that contempt for his species, which inflates the cheeks, erects the head, and stiffens the gait of those strutting animals, who sometimes stalk in assemblies for no other reason but to show in their gesture and behaviour the disregard they have for the company. Though to a truly great and philosophical mind, it is not easy to conceive a more ridiculous exhibition than this puppet; yet to others he is little less than a nuisance: for contempt is a murderous weapon, and there is this difference only between the greatest and weakest men, when attacked by it; that, in order to wound the former it must be just, whereas, without the shields of wisdom and

philosophy, which are in the possession of very few, it wants no justice to point it, but is certain to penetrate, from whatever corner it comes.

It is this disposition which inspires the empty *Cairns* to deny his acquaintance, and overlook men of merit in distress; and the little, silly, pretty *Philida* to stare at the strange creatures round her. It is this temper which constitutes the supercilious eye, the reserved look, the distant bow, the scornful leer, the affected astonishment, the loud whisper, ending in a laugh directed full in the face of another. Hence spring, in short, those numberless offences given too frequently in public and private assemblies, by persons of weak understandings, indelicate habits, and so hungry and foul-feeding a vanity, that it wants to devour whatever comes in its way.

Now if good breeding be what we have endeavoured to prove it, how foreign, and indeed how opposite to it, must such a behaviour be? And can any man call a duke or a duchess who wears it well bred? Or are they not more justly entitled to those inhuman names which they themselves allot to the lowest vulgar? But behold a more pleasing picture in the reverse. See the Earl of *C.* noble in his birth, splendid in his fortune, and embellished with every endowment of mind: how affable, how condescending!

himself the only one who seems ignorant that he is every way the greatest person in the room.

But it is not sufficient to be inoffensive, we must be profitable servants to each other: we are in the second place to proceed to the utmost verge in paying the respect due to others. And indeed whoever considers the bustle and contention about precedence, the pains and labours undertaken and sometimes the prices given for the smallest title or mark of pre-eminence, and the visible satisfaction betrayed in its enjoyment, may reasonably conclude this a matter of no small consequence. The truth is, we live in a world of common men and not of philosophers; one of those, when he appears (which is very seldom) among us, is distinguished, and very properly too, by the name of an odd fellow; for what is it less than extreme oddity to despise what the generality of the world think the labour of their whole lives well employed in procuring. We are, therefore, to adapt our behaviour to the opinion of the generality, and not to that of a few odd fellows.

It would be tedious, and perhaps impossible, to specify every instance, or to lay down exact rules for our conduct in every minute particular. However, I shall mention some of the chief which most ordinarily occur, after premising, that the business of the whole is no more than to convey

own. Nor is this equality only necessary to enable men of exalted genius and extensive knowledge to taste the sublimer pleasures, of communicating their refined ideas to each other, but is likewise necessary to the inferior happiness of every subordinate degree of society down to the lowest.

For instance, we will suppose a conversation between Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and three dancing masters. It will be acknowledged, I believe, that the heel-sophists would be as little pleased with the company of the philosophers, as the philosophers with theirs. It would be greatly therefore, for the improvement and happiness of conversation, if society could be formed on this equality; but as men are not ranked in this world by the different degrees of their understanding, but by other methods, and consequently all degrees of understanding often meet in the same class, and must frequently converse together, the impossibility of accomplishing any such Utopian scheme very plainly appears. Here therefore is a visible but unavoidable imperfection in society itself.

But as we have laid it down as a fundamental that the essence of good breeding is, to contribute as much as possible to the ease and happiness of mankind, so it will be the business of our well

bred man to endeavour to lessen this imperfection to his utmost, and to bring society as near to a level at least as he is able.

Now there are but two ways to compass this, *viz.* by raising the lower, and by lowering what is higher.

Let us suppose then that the very unequal company I have before mentioned met, the former of these is apparently impracticable. Let Socrates, for instance, institute a discourse on the nature of the soul, or Plato reason on the native beauty of virtue, and Aristotle on his occult qualities. What must become of our dancing masters? Would they not stare at one another with surprise? and most probably at our philosophers with contempt? Would they have any pleasure in such society? Or would they not rather wish themselves in a dancing school, or a green-room at the playhouse? What, therefore, have our philosophers to do, but to lower themselves to those who cannot rise to them?

And surely there are subjects on which both can converse. Has not Socrates heard of harmony? Has not Plato, who draws virtue in the person of a fine woman, any idea of the gracefulness of attitude? and has not Aristotle himself written a book on motion? In short, to be

a little serious, there are many topics on which they can at least be intelligible to each other.

How absurd then must appear the conduct of Cenodoxus, who having had the advantage of a liberal education, and having made a pretty good progress in literature, is constantly advancing learned subjects in common conversation. He talks of the classics before the ladies; and of Greek criticisms among fine gentlemen. What is this less than an insult on the company, over whom he thus affects a superiority, and whose time he sacrifices to his vanity?

Widely different is the amiable conduct of Sophronius, who, though he exceeds the former in knowledge, can submit to discourse on the most trivial matters, rather than introduce such as his company are utter strangers to. He can talk of fashions and diversions, among the ladies; nay, can even condescend to horses and dogs with country squires. This gentleman, who is equal to dispute on the highest and abstrusest points, can likewise talk on a fair or a horse race; nor had ever any one, who was not himself a man of learning, the least reason to conceive the vast knowledge of Sophronius, unless from the report of others.

Let us compare these together. Cenodoxus

proposes the satisfaction of his own pride from the admiration of others; Sophronius thinks of nothing but their amusement. In the company of Cenodoxus, every one is rendered uneasy, laments his own want of knowledge, and longs for the end of the dull assembly: With Sophronius all are pleased, and contented with themselves in their knowledge of matters which they find worthy the consideration of every man of sense. Admiration is involuntarily paid to the former; to the latter it is given joyfully. The former receives it with envy and hatred; the latter enjoys it as the sweet fruit of good will. The former is shunned, the latter courted by all.

This behaviour of Cenodoxus may in some measure account for an observation we must have frequent occasion to make: that the conversation of men of very moderate capacities is often preferred to that with men of superior talents, in which the world act more wisely than at first they may seem; for besides that backwardness in mankind to give their admiration, what can be duller or more void of pleasure than discourses on subjects above our comprehension! It is like listening to an unknown language; and if such company is ever desired by us, it is a sacrifice to our vanity, which imposes on us to believe that we may by these means

raise the general opinion of our parts and knowledge; and not from that cheerful delight which is the natural result of agreeable conversation.

There is another very common fault, equally destructive of this delight, by much the same means, though it is far from owing its original to any real superiority of parts and knowledge. This is discoursing on the mysteries of a particular profession, to which all the rest of the company, except one or two, are utter strangers. Lawyers are generally guilty of this fault, as they are more confined to the conversation of one another; and I have known a very agreeable company spoilt, where there have been two lawyers present, who have seemed rather to think themselves in a court of justice, than in a mixed assembly of persons met only for the entertainment of each other.

A well bred man, therefore, will not take more of the discourse than falls to his share, nor in this will he shew any violent impetuosity of temper, or exert any loudness of voice, even in arguing; for the information of the company and the conviction of his antagonist, are to be his apparent motives, not the indulgence of his own pride, or an ambitious desire of victory; which, if a wise man should entertain, he will be sure to conceal, with his utmost endeavour; since

he must know that to lay open his vanity in public, is no less absurd than to lay open his bosom to an enemy, whose drawn sword is pointed against it; for every man hath a dagger in his hand, ready to stab the vanity of another, whenever he perceives it.

ESSAY 86.

DEFECTS AND ERRORS IN CONVERSATION.

(*Fielding.*)

HAVING shewn in the former Essay that the pleasure of conversation must arise from the discourse being on subjects levelled to the capacity of the whole company; from being on such in which every person is equally interested; from every one being admitted to his share in the discourse; and lastly from carefully avoiding all noise, violence and impetuosity; it might seem proper to lay down some particular rules for the choice of those subjects which are most likely to conduce to the cheerful delights proposed from

this social communication. But as such an attempt might appear absurd, from the infinite variety, and perhaps too dictatorial in its nature, I shall confine myself to those topics only which seem most foreign to this delight, and which are most likely to be accompanied with consequences rather tending to make society an evil than a good.

First, I shall mention that which I have hitherto only endeavoured to restrain within certain bounds, namely arguments; but which if they were entirely banished out of company, especially from mixed assemblies, and where ladies make part of the society, it would, I believe; promote their happiness: they have been sometimes attended with bloodshed, generally with hatred from the conquered party towards his victor, and scarce ever with conviction. Here I except jocose arguments, which often produce much mirth; and serious disputes between men of learning (when none but such are present) which tend to the propagation of knowledge and the edification of the company.

Secondly slander, which, however frequently used, or however savory to the palate of ill nature, is extremely pernicious. As it is often unjust, and highly injurious to the person slandered, and always dangerous, especially in large

and mixed companies; where sometimes an undesigned offence is given to an innocent relation or friend of such persons, who is thus exposed to shame and confusion, without having any right to resent the affront. Of this there have been very tragical instances; and I have myself seen some very ridiculous ones, but which have given great pain, as well to the person offended, as to him who was the innocent occasion of giving offence.

Thirdly, all general reflections on countries, religions, and professions, which are always unjust. If these are ever tolerable, they are only from the persons who with some pleasantry ridicule their own country.

Fourthly, blasphemy, and irreverent mention of religion. I will not here debate what compliment a man pays to his own understanding, by the profession of infidelity: it is sufficient to my purpose, that he runs a risk of giving the cruelest offence to persons of a different temper. For if a loyalist would be greatly affronted by hearing any indecencies offered to the person of a temporal prince; how much more bitterly must a man, who sincerely believes in such a being as the Almighty, feel any insult or irreverence shewn to his name, his honour, or his institutions!

A fifth particular to be avoided is indecency.

We are not only to forbear repeating such words as would give an immediate affront to a lady of reputation; but must avoid raising any loose ideas tending to the offence of modesty. How inconsistent to good breeding it is to give pain and confusion to modest women is sufficiently apparent; all double entendres, and indecent jests, are therefore carefully to be avoided before them. But suppose no ladies present, nothing can be meaner, and less productive of rational mirth than this loose conversation. Nor can I help observing, to the discredit of such merriment, that it is commonly the last resource of impotent wit, the weak strainings of the lowest, silliest, and dullest fellows in the world.

Sixthly, you are to avoid knowingly mentioning any thing which may revive in any person the remembrance of some past accident, or raise an uneasy reflection on a present misfortune, or corporal blemish. To maintain this rule nicely, perhaps requires great delicacy, but it is absolutely necessary to a well bred man. I have observed numberless breaches of it; many, I believe, proceeding from negligence and inadvertency. Yet I am afraid some may be imputed to a malicious desire of triumphing in our own superior happiness and perfections; now when it proceeds from

this motive, it is not easy to imagine any thing more criminal.

Under this head, I shall caution my well bred reader against a common fault, much of the same nature, which is to mention any particular quality as absolutely essential to either man or woman, and exploding all who want it. This renders every one uneasy who is in the least self-conscious of the defect. I have heard a *boor* of fashion declare in the presence of women remarkably plain, that beauty was the chief perfection of that sex; and an essential without which no woman was worth regarding. A certain method of putting all those in the room, who are but suspicious of their defect that way, out of countenance.

I shall mention but one fault more, which is, not paying a proper regard to the present temper of our company, or the occasion of their meeting, introducing a topic of conversation, by which as great an absurdity is sometimes committed, as it would be to sing a dirge at a wedding, or an epitbalamium at a funeral.

Thus I have, I think, enumerated most of the principal errors, which we are apt to fall into in conversation; and though perhaps some particulars worthy of remark may have escaped me; yet an attention to what I have here said, may enable

the reader to discover them. At least I am persuaded, that if the rules I have now laid down were strictly observed, our conversation would be more perfect, and the pleasure resulting from it purer and more unsullied than it is at present.

But I must not dismiss this subject without some animadversions on a particular species of pleasantry, which though I am far from being desirous of banishing from conversation, requires most certainly some reins to govern, and some rule to direct it. The reader may perhaps guess I mean raillery, to which I may apply the fable of the lap dog and the ass; for while in some hands it diverts and delights us with its dexterity and gentleness; in others it paws, dawbs, offends, and hurts.

The end of conversation being the happiness of mankind, and the chief means to procure their delight and pleasure; it follows, I think, that nothing can conduce to this end, which tends to make a man uneasy and dissatisfied with himself, or which exposes him to the scorn and contempt of others. I recommend to my well bred man, who aims at raillery, the excellent character given of Horace by Persuis.

Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit,
Callidus excusso populam suspendere naso.

Yet could shrewd Horace, with disportive wit,
 Rally his friend, and tickle while he bit :
 Winning access, he play'd around the heart, .
 And gently touching, prick'd the tainted part.
 The crowd he sneer'd, but sneer'd with such a grace,
 It pass'd for dourright innocence of face.

The raillery which is consistent with good breeding is a gentle animadversion on some foible, which while it raises a laugh in the rest of the company, does not put the person rallied out of countenance, or expose him to shame and contempt. On the contrary, the jest should be so delicate, that the object of it should be capable of joining in the mirth it occasions.

All great vices, therefore, misfortunes and notorious blemishes of mind or body, are improper subjects of raillery. Indeed a hint at such is an abuse and affront, is sure to give the person (unless he be shameless and abandoned) pain and uneasiness, and should be received with contempt instead of applause, by all the rest of the company.

Again, the nature and quality of the person are to be considered. As to the first, some men will not bear any kind of raillery. I remember a gentleman who declared "he never made a jest, nor would ever take one." I do not indeed greatly recommend such a person for a

companion; but at the same time a well bred man, who is to consult the pleasure and happiness of the whole, is not at liberty to make any one present uneasy. By the quality I mean the sex, degree, profession, and circumstances; on which head I need not be very particular. With regard to the two former, all raillery on ladies and superiors should be extremely fine and gentle; and with respect to the latter, any of the rules I have laid down, most of which are to be applied to it, will afford sufficient caution.

Lastly, a consideration is to be had of the persons before whom we rally. A man will be justly uneasy, at being reminded of those railleries in one company, which he would very patiently bear the imputation of in another. Instances on this head are so obvious, that they need not be mentioned. In short, the whole doctrine of raillery is comprised in this famous line.

QUID, de quoque viro, et cui dicas sæpe caveto.

Be cautious WHAT you say, OF WHOM, and TO WHOM.

And now methinks, I hear some one cry out, that such reflections are, in effect, to exclude all raillery from conversation; and to confess the truth, it is a weapon from which many persons will do wisely in totally abstaining; for it does

the more mischief by how much the blunter it is. The sharpest wit, therefore, is only to be indulged the free use of it; for no more than a very slight touch is to be allowed, no hacking nor bruising, as if they were to hew a carcase for hounds, as Shakespeare phrases it.

Nor is it sufficient that it be sharp, it must be used likewise with the utmost tenderness and good nature; and as the nicest dexterity of a gladiator is shewn in being able to hit without cutting deep, so is this of our rallier, who is rather to tickle than wound.

The railery, indeed, consists rather in playing on peccadillos, which however they may be censured by some, are not esteemed as really blemishes in a character in the company where they are made the subject of mirth. Or secondly, in pleasantly representing real good qualities in a false light of shame, and bantering them as ill ones. So generosity may be treated as prodigality, œconomy as avarice; true courage as fool-hardiness, and so of the rest.

Lastly in ridiculing men for vices and faults which they are known to be free from. Thus the cowardice of Argyle, the dullness of Chesterfield, the unpoliteness of Dodington, may be attacked without danger of offence; and thus Lyt-

tleton may be censured for whatever vice or folly you may please to impute to him.

And however limited their bounds may appear to some ; yet in skillful and witty hands, I have known raillery, thus confined, afford a very diverting as well as inoffensive entertainment to the company.

I shall conclude this Essay with these two observations which I think may be clearly deduced from what has been said.

First, that every person who indulges his ill nature or vanity, at the expence of others, and in introducing uneasiness, vexation and confusion into society, however exalted or high titled he may be, is thoroughly ill bred.

Secondly, that whoever, from the goodness of his disposition or understanding endeavours to the utmost of his power to cultivate the good humour and happiness of others ; and to contribute to the ease and comfort of his acquaintance, however low in rank fortune may have placed him, or however clumsy he may be in his figure or demeanour, has in the truest sense of the word, a claim to good breeding.



ESSAY 87.

THE WHISTLE.

(B. Franklin.)

WHEN I was a child at seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pocket with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and being charmed with the sound of a *whistle* that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered him all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my whistle, but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth. This put me in mind what good things I could have bought with the rest of the money; and they laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection

gave me more chagrin, than the whistle gave me pleasure.

This, however, was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind; so that often when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, Don't give too much for the whistle, and so I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who gave too much for the whistle.

When I saw any one too ambitious of court favours, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, This man gives too much for his whistle.

When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect; He pays indeed, said I, too much for his whistle.

If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow citizens and the joys of benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, Poor man, said I, you do, indeed, pay too much for your whistle.

When I meet a man of pleasure sacrificing

every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporal sensations; Mistaken man, say I, you are providing pain for yourself instead of pleasure; you give too much for your whistle.

If I see one fond of fine clothes, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in prison, Alas, say I, he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.

When I see a beautiful sweet tempered girl, married to an ill natured brute of a husband, What a pity, say I, that she has paid so much for a whistle.

In short, I conceived that great part of the miseries of mankind were brought upon them by the false estimates they had made of the value of things, and by their giving too much for their *whistles*.

ESSAY 88.

THE GENTLEMAN AND THE BASKET
MAKER.*(London Magazine.)*

IT was an admirable answer, which the old philosopher bestowed upon the pertness of a very gentleman, in Sir Courtly Nice's sense of the word, who would needs be told what difference there was between a fool and a man of understanding? "Send them naked among strangers," replied the philosopher, "and they will shew it you by their success." For the sake of at least three thousand pretty fellows about town, whose eyes are too full of themselves, to discover the force of this remark, I will lend them the light of a strange Peruvian manuscript, without supposing it necessary to inform them, by what particular accident it fell into my possession.

In the midst of that vast ocean commonly

called the South Sea, lie the Isles of Solomon. In the center of these is one, not only distant from the rest, but also considerably larger. An ancestor of the prince, who now reigns absolutely in this central island, has through a long descent of ages, entailed the name of Solomon's Isles upon the whole, by the effect of that wisdom with which he polished the manners of his people.

A descendant of one of the great men of this happy island becoming a gentleman to so improved a degree, as to despise the good qualities which had originally ennobled his family, thought of nothing, but how to support and distinguish his dignity, by the pride of an ignorant mind, and a disposition abandoned to pleasure. He had a house on the sea side, where he spent great part of his time in hunting and fishing, but found himself at a loss, in pursuit of these important diversions, by means of a long slip of marshy land, overgrown with high reeds, that lay between his house and the sea. Resolving at length, that it became not a man of his quality to submit to any restraints in his pleasures, for the ease or conveniency of an obstinate mechanic; and having often endeavoured in vain to buy out the owner, who was an honest poor basket maker, and whose livelihood depended on working up the flags of those reeds in a manner

peculiar to himself, the gentleman took advantage of a high wind, and commanded his servants to burn down the barrier.

The basket maker, who saw himself undone, complained of the oppression in terms more suited to his sense of the injury, than the respect due to the rank of the offender ; and the reward which this imprudence procured him, was the additional injustice of blows, and reproaches, and all kinds of insult and indignity.

There was but one way to a remedy, and he took it. For going to the capital, with the marks of this hard usage upon him, he threw himself at the feet of the king, and procured a citation for his oppressor's appearance, who confessing the charge proceeded to justify his behaviour by the poor man's unmindfulness of the submission due from the vulgar to gentlemen of rank and distinction.

But pray, replied the king, what distinction of rank had the grand-father of your father, who being a cleaver of wood, in the palace of my ancestors, he was raised from among those vulgar, you speak of with such contempt, in reward for an instance of his courage and loyalty in defence of his master ? Yet his distinction was nobler than yours ; it was the distinction of soul, not of birth, the superiority of worth, not of fortune.

I am sorry I have a gentleman in my kingdom, who is base enough to be ignorant, that ease and distinction of fortune were bestowed upon him for this end alone, that being relieved from all cares of providing for himself, he might apply his heart, head, and hand, for the public advantage of others.

Here the king discontinuing his speech, fixed an eye of indignation on a sullen resentment of mien, which he observed in the offender, who muttered out his dislike against the encouragement such sentiments must give to the community. "Where reflection is wanting," added the king, with a smile of disdain, "men must find their defects in the pain of their sufferings. "Yanhum," said he, turning to a captain of his gallies, "strip the injured and the injurer, and conveying them to one of the most barbarous and remote islands, set them ashore in the night, and leave them to their fortune."

The place in which they were landed was a marsh, under cover of whose flags the gentleman was in hopes to conceal himself, and give the slip to a companion, whom he thought it a disgrace to be found with. But the lights in the galley having given an alarm to the savages, a considerable body of them came down, and discovered in the morning the two strangers in

their hiding place. Setting up a dismal yell, they surrounded them, and advancing nearer, with a kind of clubs, seemed determined to dispatch them without sense of hospitality or mercy.

Here the gentleman began to discover, that the superiority of his blood was imaginary, for between a consciousness of shame, and cold under the nakedness he had never been used to; a fear of the events from the fierceness of the savages, and the want of an idea, wherewith to soften, or divert their rage, he fell behind the sharer of his calamity, and with an apprehensive, unmanly, sneaking mien, gave up the post of honour, and made a leader of the very man, whom he had thought it a disgrace to consider as a companion.

The basket maker, on the contrary, to whom the poverty of his condition had made nakedness habitual, to whom a life of pain and mortification represented death as not dreadful, and whose consciousness of his skill in arts, of which these savages are ignorant, gave him hopes of safety, from proving that he could be useful, moved with bolder and more open freedom, and having plucked a handful of the flags, sat down without emotion, and making signs that he would shew them something worthy of their attention, fell to work with smiles and noddings,

while the savages drew near, and gazed in expectation of the consequence.

It was not long before he had wreathed a kind of coronet, of pretty workmanship; and rising with respect and fearlessness, approached the savage, who appeared to be the chief, and placed it gently upon his head. His figure under this new ornament so charmed and struck his followers, that they threw down their clubs, and formed a dance of welcome and congratulation, round the author of so prized a favour. There was not one but shewed marks of his impatience to be as fine as his captain, so the poor basket maker had his hands full of employment; and the savages observing one quite idle while the other was so busy in their service, took up arms in behalf of natural justice, and began to lay on arguments in favour of their purpose.

The basket maker's pity now effaced the remembrance of his sufferings; so he rose and rescued his oppressor, by making signs that he was ignorant of the art; but might, if they thought fit, be usefully employed in waiting upon the work, and fetching flags for his supply as fast as he should want them. This proposition luckily accorded with the desire of the savages to keep themselves at leisure that they might

crowd round, and mark the progress of a work in which they took so much pleasure. They left the gentleman therefore, to his duty, in the basket maker's service; and considered him from that time forward, as one who was and ought to be treated as inferior to their benefactor.

Men, wives, and children, from all corners of the island, came in droves for coronets; and setting the gentleman to gather boughs and poles, made a fine hut to lodge the basket maker, and brought down daily from the country such provision as they lived upon themselves; taking care to offer the supposed servant nothing till his master had done eating.

Three months reflection in this mortified condition gave a new and juster turn to our gentleman's improved ideas; insomuch that lying weeping and awake, one night, he thus confessed his sentiments in favour of the basket maker. "I have been to blame, and wanted judgment to distinguish between accident and excellence. When I should have measured nature, I looked only to vanity. The preference which fortune gives, is empty and imaginary, and I perceive too late, that only things of use are naturally honourable. I am ashamed, when I compare my malice, to remember your humanity; but if the gods

“ shall please to restore me to my rank and happiness, I will divide all with you in atonement for my justly punished arrogance.”

He promised, and performed his promise. For the king soon after sent the captain who had landed them, with presents to the savages, and ordered him to bring them back again. And it continues to this day a custom in that island, to degrade all gentlemen who cannot give a better reason for their pride, than that they were born to do nothing, and the word for this due punishment is

SEND HIM TO THE BASKET MAKER.

ESSAY 89.

DELICACY IN RELIEVING THE
DISTRESSED.

(Melmoth.)

LET others envy those who enjoy ample possessions; it is the application of them alone which renders them valuable in my estimation. Splendid roofs and elegant accommodations I can view without the least emotion of envy; but when I observe the rich in the full power of exerting the noble purposes of exalted generosity; it is then I confess I am apt to reflect with some regret, at the humble supplies of my own limited finances. "Nihil habet" (observes the first of orators to the greatest of emperors) "for-
"tuna tua majus, quam ut possit, nec natura
"quam ut velis, servare quam plurimos."*

* "Your good fortune has nothing greater than that you
"are able, and your disposition nothing better, than that
"you are willing, to serve many."

To be able to soften the calamities of mankind, and inspire gladness into a heart oppressed with want, is indeed the noblest privilege of fortune; but to exercise that privilege in all its generous refinements, is an instance of the most uncommon elegance both of temper and understanding.

In the ordinary dispensations of bounty little address is required; but when it is to be applied to those of a superior rank and more elevated minds, there is as much charity discovered in the *manner* as in the *measure* of our benevolence. It is extremely mortifying to a well formed spirit to see itself considered as an object of compassion; as it is the part of improved humanity to humour this honest pride in our nature, and to relieve the necessities without offending the delicacy of the distressed.

I have seen charity (if charity it might be called), insult with an air of pity, and wound at the same time that it healed. But I have seen too the highest munificence dispensed with the most refined tenderness, and a bounty conferred with as much address, as the most artful could employ in soliciting one.

ESSAY 90.

BENEVOLENCE.

(Hume.)

IT may be esteemed, perhaps, a superfluous task to prove that the benevolent or softer affections are estimable, and whenever they appear engage the approbation and good will of mankind. The epithets sociable, good natured, humane, merciful, grateful, friendly, generous, beneficent, or their equivalents, are known in all languages, and universally express the highest merit, which human nature is capable of attaining. Where these amiable qualities are attended with birth, and power, and eminent abilities, and display themselves in the good government or useful instruction of mankind, they seem even to raise the possessors of them above the rank of human nature; and make them approach in some measure to the divine. Exalted capacity,

undaunted courage, prosperous success; these may only expose a hero, a politician, to the envy and ill will of the public. But as soon as the praises are added of humane and beneficent; when instances are displayed of lenity, tenderness, or friendship, envy itself is silent, or joins in the general voice of approbation and applause.

When Pericles, the great Athenian statesman and general, was on his death bed, his surrounding friends deeming him now insensible, began to indulge their sorrow for their expiring patron, by enumerating his great qualities and successes; his conquests and victories, the unusual length of his administration, and his nine trophies erected over the enemies of the republic. "You forget," cries the dying hero, who had heard all, "you forget the most eminent of my praises, while you dwell so much on those vulgar advantages, in which fortune had a principal share. You have not observed, that no citizen has ever yet wore mourning on my account."

In men of mere ordinary talents and capacity, the social virtues become, if possible, more essentially requisite; there being nothing eminent, in that case, to compensate for the want of them, or preserve the person from our severest hatred, as well as contempt. A high ambition, an elevated courage, is apt, says Cicero, in less

perfect characters to degenerate into a turbulent ferocity. The more social and softer virtues are there chiefly to be regarded. These are always good and amiable*.

The principal advantage which Juvenal discovers in the extensive capacity of the human species, is that it renders our benevolence also more extensive, and gives us larger opportunities of spreading our kindly influence, than what are indulged to the inferior creation†.

It must indeed be confessed, that by doing good only, a man can truly enjoy the advantages of being eminent. His exalted station of itself but the more exposes him to danger and tempest. His sole prerogative is to afford shelter to inferiors, who repose themselves under his cover and protection.

But I forget, that it is not my present business to recommend generosity and benevolence, or to paint in their true colours all the genuine charms of the social virtues. These indeed sufficiently engage every heart, on the first apprehension of them, and it is difficult to abstain from some sally of panegyric, as often as they occur in discourse or reasoning.

But our object here being more the speculative

* Cic. de Off. lib. 1.

† Sat. 4. 139. et seq.

than the practical part of morals, it will suffice to remark (what will readily I believe be allowed) that no qualities are more entitled to the general good will and approbation of mankind than beneficence and humanity, friendship and gratitude, natural affection and public spirit; or whatever proceeds from a tender sympathy with others, and a generous concern for our kind and species. These, wherever they appear, seem to transfuse themselves into each beholder, and to call forth, in their own behalf, the same favourable and affectionate sentiments which they exert on all around.

We may observe, that in displaying the praises of any humane beneficent man, there is one circumstance which never fails to be amply insisted on, namely, the happiness and satisfaction derived to society from his intercourse and good offices. To his parents, we are apt to say, he endears himself by his pious attachment and dutiful care, still more than by the connections of nature. His children never feel his authority, but when employed for their advantage. With him, the ties of love are consolidated by beneficence and friendship. The ties of friendship approach, in a fond observance of each obliging office, to those of love and inclination. His domestics and dependents have in him a sure resource, and no longer dread the power of for-

tune, but so far as she exercises it over him. From him the hungry receive food, the naked clothing; the ignorant and slothful, skill and industry. Like the sun, an inferior minister of Providence, he cheers, invigorates and sustains the surrounding world.

If confined to private life, the sphere of his activity is narrower; but his influence is all benign and gentle. If exalted into a higher station, mankind and posterity reap the fruit of his labours.

It seems then undeniable, that nothing can bestow more merit on any human creature than the sentiment of benevolence in an eminent degree; and that a part, at least, of its merit arises from its tendency to promote the interest of our species, and bestow happiness on human society. We carry our view into the salutary consequences of such a character and disposition; and whatever has so benign an influence, and forwards so desirable an end, is beheld with complacency and pleasure.

The social virtues are never regarded without their beneficial tendencies, nor viewed as barren and unfruitful. The happiness of mankind, the order of society, the harmony of families, the mutual support of friends, are always considered as the result of their gentle dominion over the breasts of men.

ESSAY 91.

A BUSY BODY.

(*B. Franklin.*)

I HAVE often observed with concern that your Essays are not always equally entertaining: with more concern have I continually observed the growing vices and follies of my country folk; and though reformation is properly the concern of every man, that is, every one ought to mend one, yet it is too true in this case, that what is every body's business, is no body's business, and the business is done accordingly. I, therefore, upon mature deliberation, think fit to take no body's business wholly into my own hands; and out of zeal for the public good, design to erect myself into a kind of *censor morum*; purposing with your allowance to make use of your selection as a vehicle in which my remonstrances shall be conveyed to the world.

I am sensible I have undertaken a very un-

thankful office, and expect little besides my labour for my pains. Nay it is very probable I may displease a great number of your readers, who will not very well like to pay a few shillings to be told of their faults. But as most people delight in censure, when they are not themselves the objects of it ; if any are offended at my publicly exposing their private vices, I promise they shall soon have the satisfaction of seeing their good friends and neighbours in the same circumstances.

However, let the fair sex be assured, that I shall always treat them and their affairs with the utmost decency and respect. I intend now and then to dedicate a chapter wholly to their service, and if my lectures any way contribute to the embellishment of their minds and brightening of their understandings, without offending their modesty, I doubt not of having their favour and encouragement.

It is certain that no country in the world produces naturally finer spirits than ours ; men of genius for every kind of science, and capable of acquiring in perfection every qualification that is in esteem among mankind. But as few here have the advantage of good books, for want of which good conversation is still more scarce ; it is therefore acceptable to your readers, that you have

entertained them with well chosen extracts from good authors. This I shall also do, when I happen to have nothing of my own to say, that I think of more consequence. Sometimes I purpose to deliver lectures of morality or philosophy, and (because I am naturally inclined to be meddling with things that do not concern me) perhaps I may sometimes talk politics. And if I can by any means furnish entertainment for the public, that will give a rational diversion, and at the same time be instructive to the readers, I shall think my leisure hours well employed. If you publish this, I hereby invite all ingenious gentlemen who approve of such an undertaking to my assistance and correspondence.

It is likely, that by this time you have a curiosity to be acquainted with my name and character; and as I do not aim at public praise, I design to remain concealed; for there are such numbers of our family and relations at this time in the country, that though I have signed my name at full length, I am not under the least apprehension of being distinguished and discovered. My character, indeed, I would favour you with, but that I am cautious of praising myself, lest I should be told my trumpeter's dead; and I cannot find it in my heart at present to say any thing to my own disadvantage.

It is very common with authors in their first performances, to talk to their readers thus : If this meets with a suitable reception, or if this should meet with encouragement, I shall hereafter publish. This only manifests the value which they entertain for their own writings, since they think to frighten the public into their applause, by threatening that, unless you approve what they have already written, they intend never to write again ; when perhaps it may not be a pin matter whether they do or no. As I have not observed the critics to be more favourable on this account, I shall always avoid saying any thing of the kind ; and conclude with telling you that if you send me a bottle of ink and a quire of paper by the bearer, you may depend on hearing further from, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

THE BUSY BODY.

ESSAY 92.

A CURIOUS MAN,

(Butler.)

VALUES not things by their use or worth, but scarcity. He is very tender and scrupulous of his humour, as fanatics are of their consciences, and both for the most part in trifles. He cares not how unuseful any thing may be, so it be but unusual and rare. He collects curiosities in art or nature, not to inform his own judgment, but to catch the admiration of others, which he believes he had a right to, because the rarities are his own. That which other men neglect he believes they oversee, and stores up trifles as rare discoveries at least of his own wit and sagacity. He admires subtleties above all things, because the more subtile they are, the nearer they are to nothing; and values no art but what is spun so thin, that it is of no use at all. He had rather

have an iron chain hung about the neck of a flea, than an alderman's of gold; and Homer's Iliads in a nut shell, than Alexander's Cabinet. He had rather have the twelve apostles on a cherry stone, than those on St. Peter's portico; and would willingly sell Christ again, for that numerical piece of coin that Judas took for him.

His perpetual dotage upon curiosities at length renders him one of them, and he shews himself as none of the meanest of his rarities. He so much affects singularity, that rather than follow the fashion, that is used by the rest of the world, he will wear dissenting clothes, with odd fantastic devices, to distinguish himself from others, like marks set upon cattle. He cares not what pains he throws away upon the meanest trifle, so it be but strange, while some pity, and others laugh at his ill employed industry. He is one of those that valued Epictetus' lamp, above the excellent book he wrote by it.

If he be a book man, he spends all his time and study upon things that are never to be known. The philosopher's stone and universal medicine cannot possibly miss him, though he is sure to miss them. He is wonderfully taken with abstruse knowledge, and would rather search after truth wrapt up in mysteries and hieroglyphics, than see it evident and plainly demonstrated to his senses.

ESSAY 93.

ON LUXURY.

(B. Franklin.)

I HAVE not yet, indeed, thought of a remedy for luxury. I am not sure that in a great state it is capable of a remedy; nor that the evil is in itself always so great as it is represented. Suppose we include in the definition of luxury all unnecessary expence, and then let us consider whether laws to prevent such expence are possible to be executed, in a great country; and whether, if they could be executed, people generally would be happier, or even richer. Is not the hope of being one day able to purchase and enjoy luxuries, a great spur to labour and industry? May not luxury, therefore, produce more than it consumes, if without such a spur, people would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent.

To this purpose I remember a circumstance. The skipper of a sloop, employed between

Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small service for which he refused to be paid. My wife, understanding that he had a daughter, sent her a present of a new fashioned cap. Three years after, this skipper being at my house with an old farmer of Cape May, his passenger, he mentioned the cap, and how much his daughter had been pleased with it. But, said he, it proved a dear cap to our congregation. How so? When my daughter appeared with it at meeting it was so much admired, that all the girls resolved to get such caps from Philadelphia; and my wife and I computed that the whole could not have cost less than an hundred pounds. "True," said the farmer, "but you don't tell all the story. I think the cap was, nevertheless, an advantage to us; for it was the first thing that put our girls upon knitting worsted mittens for sale at Philadelphia, that they might have wherewithal to buy caps and ribbons; and you know that that industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater value, and answer much better purposes." Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little piece of luxury, since not only the girls were made happier by having fine caps, but the Philadelphians by the supply of warm mittens.

In our commercial towns on the coast, fortunes will occasionally be made. Some of those who grow rich will be prudent, live within bounds and preserve what they have gained for their posterity: others, fond of shewing their wealth, will be extravagant and ruin themselves. Laws cannot prevent this; and perhaps it is not always an evil to the public. A shilling spent idly by a fool, may be picked up by a wiser person. It is not therefore lost. A vain silly fellow builds a fine house, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in a few years ruins himself: but the masons, carpenters, smiths, and other honest tradesmen, have been by his employ assisted in maintaining and raising their families; the farmer has been paid for his labour, and encouraged, and the estate is now in better hands.

It is some comfort to reflect that upon the whole, the quantity of industry and prudence among mankind, exceeds the quantity of idleness and folly. Hence the increase of good buildings, farms cultivated, and populous cities filled with wealth, all over Europe, which a few ages since were only to be found on the coasts of the Mediterranean; notwithstanding the mad wars continually raging, by which are often destroyed in one year, the works of many years of peace.

ESSAY 94.

ON WOMEN.

(Lady Mary Wortly Montagu.)

IT seems to be a great but general error to treat the weaker sex with a contempt, which has a very bad influence on their conduct. How many of them think it excuse enough to say they are women, to indulge any folly that comes into their heads. This renders them useless members of the commonwealth, and only burdensome to their own families, when the wise husband thinks he lessens the opinion of his own understanding, if he at any time condescends to consult his wife's. Thus what reason nature has given them is thrown away, and blind obedience expected from them by all their ill natured masters ; and on the contrary, as blind a complaisance is shewn by those that are indulgent, who say often that women's weakness must be complied with, and that it is a

vain troublesome attempt to make them hear reason.

I attribute a great part of this way of thinking which is hardly ever controverted, either to the ignorance of authors, who are many of them heavy collegians, that have never been admitted to politer conversations than those of their bed-makers, or to the design of selling their works, which is generally the only view of writing, without any regard to truth, or the ill consequences that attend the propagation of wrong notions. A paper smartly written, though perhaps only some old conceits dressed in new words, either in rhyme or prose; either to ridicule or declaim against the ladies, is very welcome to the coffee houses, where there is hardly one man in ten, but fancies he has some reason or other to curse some of the sex most heartily. Perhaps his sister's fortunes are to run away with the money that would be better bestowed at the groom porter's; or an old mother, good for nothing, keeps a jointure from an hopeful son, that wants to make a settlement on his mistress; or a handsome young fellow is plagued with a wife that will remain alive, to hinder his running away with a great fortune, having two or three of them in love with him. These are serious misfortunes, that are sufficient to exasperate the mildest tem-

pers into a contempt of the sex ; not to speak of lesser inconveniences, which are very provoking at the time they are felt. •

How many pretty gentlemen have been unmercifully jilted by pert hussies, after having curtsied to them at half a dozen operas, nay permitted themselves to be led out twice ; yet after these encouragements, which amount very near to an engagement, have refused their billet doux and perhaps married other men. How welcome is a couplet or two in scorn of womankind, to such a disappointed lover, and with what comfort he reads in many profound authors, that they are never to be pleased but by coxcombs, and consequently, he owes his ill success to the brightness of his understanding, which is beyond female comprehension. The country squire is confirmed, in the elegant choice he has made, in preferring the conversation of his hounds to that of his wife, and the kind keepers, a numerous sect, find themselves justified in throwing away their time and estates on a parcel of jilts, when they read that neither birth nor education can make any of the sex rational creatures, and they can have no value, but what is to be seen in their faces.

Hence springs the applause with which such libels are read. But I would ask the applauders,

if these notions in their own nature, are likely to produce any good effect towards reforming the vicious, instructing the weak, or guiding the young. I would not every day tell my footmen that their whole fraternity were scoundrels, that lying and stealing were inseparable qualities from their cloth, that I should think myself very happy in them, if they confined themselves to innocent lies, and would only steal candles' ends. On the contrary, I would say in their presence, that birth and money were accidents of fortune, that no man was to be seriously despised for wanting them, that an honest faithful servant was a character of more value, than an insolent corrupt lord; that the real distinction between man and man lay in integrity, which in one shape or other, generally met with its reward in the world, and, could not fail of giving the highest pleasure, by a consciousness of virtue, which every man feels, that is so happy to possess it.

With this gentleness would I treat my inferiors; with much greater esteem would I speak to that beautiful half of mankind who are distinguished by petticoats. If I were a divine, I would remember, that in their first creation they were, designed as a help to the other sex, and nothing was ever made incapable of the end of its crea-

tion. It is true, the first lady had so little experience that she hearkened to the persuasion of an insolent dangler; and if you mind, he succeeded by persuading her, that she was not so wise as she should be.

Men that are not wise enough to shew any superiority in their arguments, hope to be yielded to by a faith, that as they are men, all the reason that has been allotted to mankind, has fallen to their share. I am seriously of another opinion. As much greatness of mind may be shewn in submission as in command; and some women have suffered a life of hardships with as much philosophy as Cato traversed the desarts of Africa, and without that support which the view of glory offered him, which is enough for the human mind that is touched with it to go through any toil or danger. But this is not the situation of a woman, whose virtue must only shine to her own recollection, and loses that name when it is ostentatiously exposed to the world. A lady who has performed her duty as a daughter, a wife, and a mother, raises in us as much veneration as Socrates or Xenophon, and much more than I would pay either to Julius Cæsar or Cardinal Mazarine; though the first was the most famous enslaver of his country, and the last the most successful plunderer of his master.

A woman really virtuous, in the utmost extent of this expression, has virtue of a purer kind than any philosopher has ever shewn; since she knows if she has sense, and without it there can be no virtue, that mankind is too much prejudiced against her sex to give her any degree of that fame which is so sharp a spur to their great actions. I have some thoughts of exhibiting a set of pictures of such meritorious ladies, where I shall say nothing of the fire of their eyes or the pureness of their complexions; but give them such praises as befits a rational sensible being, virtues of choice and not beauties of accident.

I beg they would not so far mistake me as to think I am undervaluing their charms: a beautiful mind in a beautiful body, is one of the finest objects shewn us by nature. I would not have them place so much value on a quality that can be only useful to one, as to neglect that which may be of benefit to thousands, by precept or by example. There will be no occasion of amusing themselves with trifles, when they consider themselves capable of not only making the most amiable, but the most estimable figures in life.

Begin then, ladies, by paying those authors with scorn and contempt, who with a sneer of affected admiration, would throw you below the dignity of the human species.

ESSAY 95.

SOLILOQUY OF AN EPHEMERA,
IN A LETTER TO A FRENCH LADY.

(*From B. Franklin.*)

YOU may remember, my dear friend, that when we lately spent that happy day, in the delightful garden and happy society of the Moulin Joly, I stopt a little in one of the walks, and staid some time behind one of the company. We had been shewn numberless skeletons of a kind of little fly called an ephemera, whose successive generations we were told were bred and expired within the day. I happened to see a living company of them on a leaf; who appeared to be engaged in conversation.

You know I understand the language of inferior animals; my too great application to the study of them, is the best excuse I can give for the little progress I have made in your charming language. I listened through curiosity to the

discourse of these little creatures; but as they in their national vivacity spoke three or four together, I could make but little of their conversation, I found however, by some broken expressions that I heard now and then, they were warmly disputing on the merit of two foreign musicians, one a gnat, the other a musquito; in which dispute they spent their time, seemingly as regardless of the shortness of life, as if they had been sure of living a month. Happy people! thought I, you live certainly under a wise, just, and mild government, since you have no public grievances to complain of, nor any subject of contention, but the perfections or imperfections of foreign music.

I turned my head from them to an old grey headed one, who was single on another leaf, and talking to himself. Being amused with his soliloquy, I put it down in writing, in hopes it will likewise amuse her to whom I am so much indebted for the most pleasing of all amusements, her delicious company and heavenly harmony.

"It was," says he, "the opinion of learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished long before my time, that this vast world, the Moulin Joly, could not itself subsist more than eighteen hours: and I think there was some foundation for their opinion, since,

“ by the apparent motion of the great luminary,
“ that gives life to all nature, and which in my
“ time has evidently declined considerably to-
“ wards the ocean, at the end of our earth, it
“ must then finish its course, be extinguished in
“ the waters that surround us, and leave the
“ world in cold and darkness, necessarily pro-
“ ducing universal death and destruction.

“ I have lived seven of those hours; a great age,
“ being no less than 420 minutes of time. How
“ very few of us continue so long? I have seen ge-
“ nerations born, flourish, and expire. My present
“ friends are the children and grand children of
“ the friends of my youth, who are now alas! no
“ more. And I must soon follow them; for by
“ the course of nature, though still in health, I
“ cannot expect to live above seven or eight mi-
“ nutes longer. What now avails all my toil
“ and labour, in amassing honey dew on this leaf,
“ which I cannot live to enjoy! What the political
“ struggles I have been engaged in, for the good
“ of my compatriot inhabitants of this bush, or
“ my philosophical studies, for the benefit of our
“ race in general! For in politics (what can laws
“ do without morals?) our present race of ephemeræ
“ will in the course of a few minutes be-
“ come corrupt like those of other and older
“ bushes, and consequently as wretched.

“ And in philosophy how small our progress !
“ Alas, art is long and life is short ! My friends
“ would comfort me with the idea of a name,
“ they say I shall leave behind me ; and they
“ tell me I have lived long enough to nature and
“ to glory. But what will fame be to an ephe-
“ mera who no longer exists ? and what will be-
“ come of all history in the eighteenth hour,
“ when the world itself, even the whole Moulin
“ Joly, shall come to its end, and be buried in
“ universal ruin ?

“ To me, after all my eager pursuits, no solid
“ pleasures now remain ; but the reflection of a
“ long life spent in meaning well, the sensible
“ conversation of a few good lady ephemeræ,
“ and now and then a kind smile and a tune
“ from the ever amiable Brilliant.”

ESSAY 96.

PREJUDICE.

(Female Spectator.)

AMONG the various kinds of error into which human nature is liable to fall, there are some which people of a true understanding are sensible of in themselves; yet either wanting a strength of resolution to break through what by long custom is become habitual, or being of too indolent a temper to endeavour an alteration, still persist to act in contradiction to the dictates even of their own judgment.

What we call prejudice or prepossession, is certainly that which stands foremost in the rank of frailties. It is the great ringleader of almost all the mistakes whether in the sentiments of our hearts, or the conduct of our actions.

As milk is the first aliment of the body, so prejudice is the first thing given to the mind to feed upon. No sooner does the thinking faculty

begin to unfold itself than prejudice mingles with it, and spoils its operations. Whatever we are then either taught, or happen to like or dislike, we, for the most part, continue to like or dislike to our life's end ; so difficult is it to eradicate in age that tendency we have imbibed in youth.

It is this fatal propensity which binds as it were our reason in chains, and will not suffer it to look abroad, or exert any of its powers. Hence are our conceptions bounded ; our notions meanly narrow ; our ideas for the most part unjust ; and our judgment shamefully led astray.

The brightest rays of truth in vain shine out upon us, when prejudice has shut our eyes against it. We are rendered by it wholly incapable of examining any thing, and take all upon trust that it presents to us. This not only makes us liable to be guilty of injustice, ill nature and ill manners to others, but also insensible of what is owing to ourselves ; we run with all our might from a real and substantial good, and court a phantom, a name, a nothing. We mistake infamy for renown, and ruin for advantage ; in fine, wherever a strong prejudice prevails, all is sure to go amiss.

Parents who are strongly imbued with any opinion, are sure to instil it into the minds of

their children, and so render prejudice hereditary. Whereas if young minds are left to themselves, reason would operate, we should examine before we judge, and not condemn or applaud, but as the cause deserves. Whoever is intrusted with the care of youth, as parents are by nature, and governors, tutors, and preceptors, by commission from them, should methinks endeavour rather to calm than to excite any violent emotions in their pupils. They should convince them that nothing but virtue is truly worthy of an ardent love or ambition, and that vice alone ought to be held in abhorrence.

This would be a laudable prejudice, if it should be deemed a prejudice; a prejudice which would go hand in hand with reason, and secure to us that peace and happiness which all other prejudices are sure to destroy.

What sad effects have not many kingdoms experienced by the hereditary prejudice between two powerful families, who hated each other merely because their forefathers did so? as for example, the Guelfs and Ghibelins of Italy; the Marii and Metelli of Rome, and the Barons' Wars of England.

National prejudices are yet more dangerous, and indeed much more ridiculous. What can be a greater absurdity than for one whole people to hate another only for being born in a

different climate, and which they are taught to believe inspires them with some sentiments or inclinations repugnant to their own, though perhaps without foundation. Whoever therefore, by example or precept, labours to keep these foolish animosities alive, in my opinion, deserves little thanks from the world, either for his wit, or good will to mankind.

Many writers have done all in their power to divide England against itself, and render county and county obnoxious to each other. The stage, which was designed as the school of morality, and by mingling pleasure with instruction to harmonize the mind, and inspire amity among men, has in some theatrical representations been most shamefully prostituted to ends the very reverse; and the Scottish, Irish, and Welsh nations have been too often held up to the most unjustifiable ridicule. The sarcasms vented here and elsewhere have often a poignancy in them, which cannot but be resented by those who have understanding enough to perceive when they are affronted: they likewise occasion heart burnings against those who encourage and seem to be pleased with the ridicule, which is utterly subversive of the cordiality and good will that ought to subsist between every community of a nation in order to maintain the happiness of the whole.

ESSAY 97.

MISCHIEVOUS EFFECTS OF
PREJUDICE.*(Female Spectator.)*

IN a former Essay I mentioned some evils which are derived from prejudice ; but I was led into a reflection on it by a late instance, which though in private life, deserves the attention of the public, because it may be a warning against instilling into youth principles which are not to be eradicated in maturity.

A gentleman who had acquired a considerable fortune by merchandise, left a son twelve and a daughter five years of age. As the mother was likewise dead, the son was continued at Westminster school, by his guardians ; and the daughter committed to the care of her mother's sister. This good lady was extremely fond of her young charge, and neglected nothing that might render her perfectly accomplished. The means allowed

her for improvement were not thrown away: she had an excellent capacity, and took such delight in learning, that her progress far surpassed the expectations of her instructors. Her person was lovely, nature had bestowed upon her a thousand charms, and without being strikingly beautiful, there was something in her more attractive and agreeable than is often found in the most exquisite beauties.

It is not to be wondered that many should think so lovely and accomplished a woman worthy of their most serious addresses; but though she was early beset with admirers, she seemed little touched with all the fine things daily lavished on her charms.

Her brother, after having perfected himself in every thing deemed necessary for his education at home, was sent abroad to make himself acquainted with the customs and manners of other countries. After passing some time in France and Italy, he returned home an accomplished and complete gentleman. Sabina, for so I may call this young lady, was between nineteen and twenty when he came back to England. As they had not seen each other for above four years, each was charmed with the accomplishments and good qualities of the other, and few brothers and sisters were ever united by a

more sincere affection. They were always proud of being seen together. In the Mall, or any place, of public resort they were constant companions. On their return one night from the opera, as he was conducting her home according to his custom, he said laughing, "I believe, sister, you have made a conquest. I perceived a certain friend of mine, in the pit, who seemed more engrossed by you than by any thing on the stage." "I should be sorry," answered she in the same gay tone, "that any of your friends should have so bad a taste as to suffer any thing to divert his attention from the delightful music we have just heard."

"Oh," resumed he, "music is an incentive to love, and as he did not hear that of your voice he might not lose what issued from the orchestra, by fixing his eyes on your charms during the whole evening, which I am sure you must have noticed yourself, if you would confess the truth." "It is so common" rejoined she, "for those in the pit to stare into the boxes, that I should have found nothing particular in what you tell me, had I really observed, which I unaffectedly assure you I did not."

On this he rallied her a little on pretending to be absolutely free from the vanity which the men

impute to our sex ; and she retorted with equal pleasantry on the foibles of mankind. This kind of chit-chat brought them to her door, where he took leave of her, being engaged to sup with some gentlemen at a tavern, and she went in ; and it is likely thought no more of what had passed.

However, the friend he had mentioned happened to be one of the company with whom he was engaged. He was a gentleman of ancient family, of fine parts and education, and a graceful person, and was in possession of a large estate in Wales, of which he was a native. This gentleman, whose real name I shall conceal under that of Lewellin, was in effect much charmed with Sabina. Not knowing who she was, he complimented her brother on the pleasure he had in entertaining so freely the most agreeable woman in the world.

To this the brother replied in terms which shewed that the lady was his sister ; and what he said being confirmed by another of the company, who was also at the opera, and had seen Sabina before, Lewellin resumed his usual gaiety, which had been a little disturbed by the consideration that he might find in the person of an intimate friend an impediment to that passion, which, though of recent date had already made a rapid

progress in his heart. He made no farther disclosure of it that night, but early the next morning visited the brother of his adorable; and, after a very short prelude, acquainted him that his business was love, and that though he had seen his sister but once he felt for her all the passion a man could be possessed of. That his life would thence forward be a burthen to him, if he was not blessed with the hope of passing it with her; and he concluded with conjuring him by all their mutual friendship to introduce him to her if her heart was not already engaged, and to favour his pretensions with all the interest which he derived from his near relationship.

The brother, highly gratified with a proposal so advantageous to Sabina, told him with the same frankness, that nothing could afford him so perfect a joy as the union of two persons so dear to him. He also assured him, that he had several times talked to his sister on the subject of marriage, and she had always answered him in such a manner, as knowing her candour and the confidence she reposed in him, he was perfectly convinced that she had not yet entertained the slightest partiality for any other admirer. To this he added that he would go directly to her lodgings, and prepare her for the honour of a visit from him that very afternoon.

Lewellin embraced and thanked him in terms which shewed the fervency of his passion, and after having, according to the custom of lovers, a thousand times renewed his entreaties that he would be zealous in his cause, and appointed a place for a new meeting, he took his leave with the most flattering ideas of speedy success.

The brother of Sabina, on the other hand, had never undertaken a more pleasing office. Not doubting that the affair would be easily accomplished, as there was not the least exception, either to the family, fortune, character, or personal accomplishments of Lewellin, he was not so solicitous to furnish himself previously with arguments to convince his sister, of what he imagined she would have sense enough to distinguish without the assistance of persuasion. In this opinion he went to her apartment. Finding her at breakfast in a loose dishabille, "I am glad," said he, "I am come before you are dressed; for I expect you will equip yourself in the most becoming manner, to rivet more strongly those chains you have already thrown over a heart which I venture to recommend to your acceptance."

She looked earnestly at him as he finished these words, and observing a mixture of gaiety and seriousness in his countenance, knew not

well how to comprehend his meaning, or in what manner to answer. But after a short pause, "You are either in a very merry humour this morning," she replied, "and talk after this fashion merely to divert yourself, or else you want to prove that vanity in me, of which last night you accused our whole sex. If it be the former, I shall be ready to join in any thing that gives you pleasure; but if the latter, I assure you, I shall never think that heart worthy of my acceptance that is to be gained or preserved by outward shew." "Perfectly well judged, indeed, my dear sister," he replied, "but I expected no less from you, and spoke as I did, only to give you an opportunity of testifying that good sense, which can never fail both of engaging and making happy whoever you desire to make so. I hope, also," continued he growing more grave, "it will so direct your choice, as to establish a lasting felicity for yourself."

After she had answered this compliment in suitable terms, he told her, he thought it was now time to think of marriage, and that the person he should introduce that afternoon had all the qualifications which a woman could wish to find in a partner for life. He proceeded to inform her that he had commenced an acquaint-

tance with him in Italy, and that they had lived in the greatest intimacy ever since. "Not a secret in either of our hearts," said he, "but what each communicated to the other; I must therefore be allowed to be a competent judge of his principles, honour, fortune, and every thing that belongs to him, and can venture to assure you that his good qualities merit the love and esteem of all who have the pleasure of knowing him.

Such a character, from the mouth of one incapable of deceiving her, induced her to receive the proposal seriously; and she displayed as much satisfaction as was becoming a young lady of her strict modesty.

Finally, the brother had reason to believe his negotiation would be crowned with success, and that he had inspired with her a prepossession in favour of this new lover, which wanted nothing but the sight of him to be ripened into passion. It is probable indeed, that his conjectures would not have deceived him, had he not unhappily destroyed all the work by mentioning the name and country of the person he so earnestly recommended; an error of which he was unconscious, as he was wholly ignorant of the only weakness which could be imputed to his sister.

That aunt with whom she had been educated

from her most tender years, had, I know not on what account, a strong hatred to every one belonging to Wales; and she incessantly spoke of that whole people in contemptible and opprobrious terms.

Thus Sabina imbibed such a prejudice against them, as induced her to imagine that no Welshman could possess the slightest merit. And she no sooner heard her brother say he was of that country, than all her sweetness was converted into sourness and disdain, and she cried out in a tone full of scorn and derision, "Heavens? Is it "a Welshman of whom you have been saying all "these fine things."

The brother was justly surprised at so sudden and incomprehensible a turn; but she soon unraveled the mystery, by railing in the same terms as her aunt had been accustomed to do, against the country and its natives. In vain he represented to her the injustice of such a prejudice; in vain he recited examples of great and worthy persons born in climates where their virtues or qualifications could have been least expected; in vain he urged that Wales could boast of many advantages beyond any other part of the British dominions. The prejudice was fixed and rooted in her heart; and all his representations failed in producing the slightest change in her sentiments.

“ Well sister,” said he at last, “ since I find my arguments have so little weight, I shall leave you to be convinced by your own judgment, which I am certain will direct you better when you are once acquainted with Lewellin, whom, notwithstanding all your prejudice, I shall bring this afternoon, and insist upon your receiving him as my friend at least.” “ Since you oblige me to see him,” she answered, “ decency compels me to treat him with civility ; but this you may expect, nor ought to take it ill of me, that if he makes any declaration of the kind you mention, I shall give him such a reply as will put a stop to any future thoughts of me, and convince him that I am determined, whatever be my fate, never to wear a leek in my bosom.”

It is utterly impossible to describe how much the brother was astonished and troubled to perceive that so obstinate a folly domineered over the excellent understanding of his sister. He doubted not, however, but the acquaintance of Lewellin, who was deservedly accounted one of the most accomplished and handsome men of the age, would have the same effect on her as on all others who had ever discoursed with him.

He, therefore, offered no farther opposition to her humour ; but flattering himself with the pleasure he should afterwards have in rallying her on the change in her sentiments, he took his leave, thanking her in an ironical way, though gravely, for the consideration she shewed him in resolving to treat a Welshman well, because he was his friend. The full confidence that an acquaintance with Lewellin would change her ridiculous prejudice against his countrymen, prevented him from acquainting his friend with any thing which had passed, and, indeed, rather inspired him with hopes of success than the contrary. He only told him that in case he found Sabina at the second sight worthy these tender sentiments she had at first inspired him with, he thought it proper, as her temper was extremely reserved, that he should not make his declaration till by a repetition of his visits they were become better acquainted. This seemed so reasonable, that all impatient as the lover was, he could not but approve it, especially as his friend promised that he would in the mean time labour for his interest.

He accordingly acted for his friend in the most prudent manner ; but alas, what wisdom is sufficient to combat rooted prejudice ! Sabina could not but confess that her lover was a hand-

some and accomplished man, yet the thoughts of his country counteracted all the effects of his numerous good qualities.

She performed her promise to her brother indeed, and received his friend with civility; but her behaviour was so distant and reserved, as to shew any one who was acquainted with her temper how little she was pleased with his company. Lewellin, however, was not unhappy enough to discover it; and imputing her extraordinary shyness to modesty, proposed to her brother several parties of pleasure, all of which she absolutely declined. When he mentioned ombre, she hated cards; if an excursion out of town, a country ramble was her aversion; Ranelagh gave her the vapours; Vauxhall gardens were too cold; the fire works at Cuper's were shocking; the season of plays was over for polite people; and a concert always made her melancholy. These refusals were accompanied with such marks of disdain, as overwhelmed her brother with vexation, and induced him to shorten his visit, much to the dissatisfaction of Lewellin, who in spite of the coldness and indeed ill humour of Sabina, thought her more charming at this second interview, than he had done at the first, and consequently, was more in love than ever.

To avoid a conversation in which he must either deceive or pain his friend, the brother pretended an engagement, and parted from Lewellin the moment they quitted Sabina's lodgings. His sincere friendship for Lewellin, and his tender regard for the welfare of his sister, rendered him extremely uneasy and perplexed. Early the next morning he went to her again; and after taking the privilege of a brother in condemning her conduct and the foolish prepossession which had occasioned it, he had recourse to arguments, and endeavoured to season her out of a prejudice which had not the least foundation in truth or common sense.

Had he been endowed with the eloquence of an angel, all his reasoning would have been lost on the perverse, the obstinate Sabina. Equally deaf to remonstrances or persuasions, she entreated him to persecute her no more with discoursing on so disagreeable a subject; and begged he would not take it ill, if in this instance she never could be brought to acquiesce in his opinion. To the question whether she found any thing disagreeable either in the person or conversation of Lewellin, she replied, "Although I cannot deny that he is handsome, well-bred, witty, and genteel, yet as a Welshman he is my aversion." She declined any repetition of his visit, and con-

cluded, "If you had that real affection for me
"which you pretend, and which I might expect
"from a brother, you would not desire me to
"subject myself to such constraint, as to treat
"with civility or even to sit in the company of a
"native of Wales."

Meanwhile Lewellin, who little suspected his misfortune, had sought his friend and confidant while he was engaged with his sister; and not finding him at home, went to every place where they were accustomed to meet. But the brother, from unwillingness, to make a painful communication, avoided him so industriously that for three days all his researches were useless. This made Lewellin imagine, that all was not so right as he had at first flattered himself; that either the brother did not approve his alliance, or that Sabina herself objected to it. Impatient to be satisfied he went to his lodgings, and waited till his return, though it was late at night.

The brother, surprised to see him, and unprepared for the meeting, could neither deny that he had purposely shunned him, nor conceal the motive. He delicately hinted the aversion of his sister to Wales, and owned his apprehension that his country would be an objection not easily removed. But as he did not

describe the full force of her prejudice, the lover still retained hopes of surmounting the difficulty.

After much conversation, it was agreed that Lewellin should write to her; disclosing his passion, but hinting, that he was not ignorant of her objection to his country; and assuring her that if he should be so happy as to merit her affection he would never desire her to visit Wales; but would live with her either in London, or any other place which she might chuse as a residence. The brother himself was the bearer of this epistle, and once more exerted his interest with his sister in behalf of the truly devoted Lewellin.

But all his efforts were ineffectual, and so far was he from inducing her to read it, that in the midst of their conversation she snatched it from his hand, tore it in pieces, and trampled it under foot. A second quarrel was the consequence; and he left her with a resolution never more to repeat his visit. Her other relations still pressed her in favour of Lewellin, though with no better effect than to give her new opportunities of displaying her obstinacy and prejudice.

Meanwhile Lewellin, though now apprised of the whole truth, could not be persuaded to desist; and as there was no possibility of inducing

her to receive another visit, pursued her to church, watched her wherever she went, and laboured in vain to soften her by his persevering and respectful attentions. At length tired out with the persecution she received on all sides, she went privately into the country, acquainting no one with the place of her retirement.

Her brother and her friends were much troubled with her flight; but the passionate Lewellin was inconsolable. So truly did his faithful heart feel her disdain, that he fell into a dangerous fever, from which he recovered with difficulty.

Great inquiries were made for the fair fugitive; but she had taken such precautions as to frustrate all, till her friends received intelligence from her which at first filled them with sorrow, and soon afterwards with grief.

Sabina, to amuse herself in her retirement, had frequented all the diversions which the place of her residence afforded. At one of these rural entertainments, she fell into the company of a young gentleman, who informed her that he had made a temporary excursion from London, to elude the solicitations of his friends, who pressed him to marry a person for whom he had no inclination. This party, as she thought, of circumstances inspired her with good will towards him; and when he addressed her, as he soon did, on

a more tender subject, it grew up into affection. She candidly owned that her visit to the country was occasioned by the same motive as his own, and acquainted him with her name and family, which she had till then disguised.

Whether he at first intended this as a serious affair, or only to divert himself, is uncertain; but after he knew who she was, he left nothing unsaid, or undone, that he thought might engage her affection. She was not indeed, as she has since owned, in love with him; but where she was, she saw no one whom she could deem a fit companion except himself. He affected the warmest passion, and declared that he had an estate superior to what her fortune entitled her to expect.

This, joined to the hope of silencing the importunities of her friends, and all further overtures from Lewellin, or any other person whom she might happen to dislike, prevailed on her to listen favourably to the proposals of her new lover, and finally to intrust him with her person and fortune. She married him without consulting one of her friends, without inquiring into his circumstances; and without any settlement or provision. In a few days she returned a bride to London, to the surprise of all her acquaintance.

As her husband's circumstances were not immediately discovered, the disinterested part of her acquaintance paid their compliments of congratulation; but her kindred and intimate friends, especially her brother, could not approve her precipitate step, and were fearful of the event.

Not to prolong the narrative, the unhappy Sabina had not been married above a month before she found her whole fortune was appropriated for the payment of her husband's debts. That fear of his creditors, and not of a disagreeable match as he had pretended, had driven him to that part of the country where it was her ill fortune to become his prey. That he was neither the possessor nor heir of a single foot of land; but had led a loose idle life, and in fact was no other than a common sharper.

Difficult would it be for me to represent the miseries of her condition, which were rendered yet more severe from the consciousness of having merited them by a folly for which she could now find no excuse. After living about half a year with a husband for whom she had lost all regard, vexed with his ill usage, and experiencing all the mortifications derived from reproaches abroad and want at home, she was at length relieved from his presence. He quitted her and went to

France, in quest it is supposed of new adventures.

This once gay, obstinate, lady, is now glad to accept the contributions of her friends for her support, visited by few, respected by yet fewer, and caressed by none. She has leisure to reflect upon, and lament, the unhappy prepossession which made her so industriously fly the good offered by Heaven, in a wealthy, generous, and accomplished man, to throw herself into the arms of an abandoned villain and shameless impostor.

ESSAY 98.

ARTS AND SCIENCES.

(*Goldsmith.*)

A DISPUTE has for some time divided the philosophers; it is debated, whether arts and sciences are more serviceable or prejudicial to mankind. They who maintain the cause of literature, endeavour to prove their usefulness from the impossibility of a large number of men subsisting in a small tract of country without them; from the pleasure which attends the acquisition, and from the influence of knowledge in promoting practical morality.

Those who maintain the opposite opinion, display the happiness and innocence of the uncultivated nations who live without learning; they urge the numerous vices which are to be found only in polished society, enlarge on the oppression, the cruelty, and the blood, which must necessarily be shed to cement civil society, and insist upon the happy equality of conditions in a barbarous

state, preferable to the unnatural subordination of a more refined condition.

This dispute, which has already given so much employment to speculative indolence, has been managed with much ardour, and (not to suppress our sentiments) with but little capacity. They who insist that the sciences are useful in refined society are certainly right; and they who maintain that barbarous nations are more happy without them are right also. But when one side for this reason attempts to prove them as universally useful to the solitary barbarian as to the native of a crowded commonwealth; or when the other endeavours to banish them as prejudicial to all society, even from populous states as well as from the inhabitants of the wilderness, they are both wrong; since that knowledge which makes the happiness of a refined European, would be a torment to the precarious tenant of an Asiatic wild.

Let me, to prove this, transport the imagination for a moment to the midst of a forest in Siberia. There we behold the inhabitant, poor indeed, but equally fond of happiness with the most refined philosopher of Europe. The earth lies uncultivated and uninhabited for miles around him; his little family and he, the sole and undisputed possessors. In such circumstances na-

ture and reason will induce him to prefer a hunter's life to that of cultivating the earth. He will certainly adhere to that manner of living, which is carried on at the smallest expence of labour, and to that food which is most agreeable to the appetite; he will prefer indolent though precarious luxury, to a laborious though permanent competence; and a knowledge of his own happiness will determine him to persevere in native barbarity.

In like manner his happiness will incline him to bind himself by no law. Laws are made in order to secure permanent property; but he is possessed of no property which he is afraid to lose, and desires no more than will be sufficient to sustain him; to enter into compacts with others, would be undergoing a voluntary obligation, without the expectance of any reward. He and his countrymen are tenants, not rivals, in the same unexhaustible forest; the increased possessions of one by no means diminishes the expectations arising from equal assiduity in another. There is no need of laws therefore to repress ambition, where there can be no mischief attending its most boundless gratifications.

Our solitary Siberian will, in like manner, find the sciences not only entirely useless, in directing his practice, but disgusting even in specula-

tion. In every contemplation our curiosity must be first excited by the appearances of things, before our reason undergoes the fatigue of investigating the causes. Some of those appearances are produced by experiment, others by minute inquiry; some arise from a knowledge of foreign climates, and others from an intimate study of our own. But there are few objects in comparison which present themselves to the inhabitant of a barbarous country; the game he hunts or the transient cottage he builds, make up the chief objects of his concern; his curiosity, therefore, must be proportionably less; and if that is diminished, the reasoning faculty will be diminished in proportion.

Besides, sensual enjoyment adds wings to curiosity. We consider few objects with ardent attention, but those which have some connection with our wishes, our pleasures, or our necessities. A desire of enjoyment first interests our passions in the pursuit, points out the subject of investigation, and reason then comments when sense has led the way. An increase in the number of our enjoyments, therefore, necessarily produces an increase of scientific research; but in countries where almost every enjoyment is wanting, reason there seems destitute of its great inspirer,

and speculation is the business of fools when it becomes its own reward.

The barbarous Siberian is too wise, therefore, to exhaust his time in quest of knowledge, which neither curiosity prompts nor pleasure impels him to pursue. When told of the exact measurement of a degree upon the meridian at Quito, he feels no pleasure in the account; when informed that such a discovery tends to promote navigation and commerce, he finds himself no way interested in either. A discovery which some have pursued at the hazard of their lives, affects him with neither astonishment nor pleasure. He is satisfied with thoroughly understanding the few objects which contribute to his own felicity; he knows the properest places where to lay the snare for the sable, and discerns the value of furs with more than European sagacity. More extended knowledge would only serve to render him unhappy; it might lend a ray to shew him the misery of his situation, but could not guide him in his efforts to avoid it. Ignorance is the happiness of the poor.

The misery of a being endowed with sentiments above its capacity of fruition, is most admirably described in one of the fables of Locman the Indian moralist:

“An elephant, that had been peculiarly ser-

“viceable in fighting the battles of Wistnow, was
“ordered by the god to wish for whatever he
“thought proper, and the desire should be at-
“tended with immediate gratification. The
“elephant thanked his benefactor with bended
“knees, and desired to be endowed with the rea-
“son and the faculties of a man. Wistnow was
“sorry to hear the foolish request, and endea-
“voured to dissuade him from his misplaced am-
“bition; but finding it to no purpose, gave him
“at last such a portion of wisdom as would cor-
“rect even the Zendavesta of Zoroaster:

“The reasoning elephant went away rejoic-
“ing in his new acquisition; and though his
“body still retained its ancient form, he found
“his appetites and passions entirely altered. He
“first considered that it would not only be
“more comfortable, but also more becom-
“ing, to wear clothes; but unhappily he had
“no method of making them himself, nor had
“he the use of speech to demand them from
“others; and this was the first time he felt real
“anxiety. He soon perceived how much more
“elegantly men were fed than he; therefore he
“began to loath his usual food, and longed for
“those delicacies which adorn the tables of
“princes; but here again he found it impossible
“to be satisfied, for though he could easily ob-

“tain flesh; yet he found it impossible to dress
“it in any degree of perfection.

“In short every pleasure that contributed to
“the felicity of mankind, served only to render
“him more miserable, as he found himself utterly
“deprived of the power of enjoyment. In this
“manner he led a repining discontented life,
“detesting himself and displeased with his ill
“judged ambition; till at last his benefactor
“Wistnow, taking compassion on his forlorn
“situation, restored him to the ignorance and the
“happiness which he was originally formed to
“enjoy.”

To attempt to introduce the sciences into a nation of wandering barbarians, is only to render them more miserable than ever nature designed they should be. A life of simplicity is best fitted to a state of solitude.

The great lawgiver of Russia attempted to improve the desolate inhabitants of Siberia by sending among them some of the politest men of Europe. The consequence has shewn, that the country was as yet unfit to receive them; they languished for a time with a sort of exotic malady, every day degenerated from themselves, and at last, instead of rendering the country more polite, they conformed to the soil, and put on barbarity.

In order to make the sciences useful in any country, it must first become populous: the inhabitant must go through the different stages of hunter, shepherd, and husbandman. Then, when property becomes valuable, and consequently gives cause for injustice; then, when laws are appointed to repress injury, and secure possessions; when men by the sanction of those laws become possessed of superfluity; when luxury is thus introduced and demands its continual supply, then it is that the sciences become necessary and useful; the state then cannot subsist without them; they must then be introduced, at once to teach men to draw the greatest possible quantity of pleasure from circumscribed possession; and to restrain them within the bounds of moderate enjoyment.

The sciences are not the cause of luxury but its consequence, and this destroyer thus brings with it an antidote which resists the virulence of its own poison. By asserting that luxury introduces the sciences, we assert a truth; but if, with those who reject the utility of learning, we assert that the sciences also introduce luxury, we shall be at once false, absurd, and ridiculous.

ESSAY 99.

ON STYLE.

(Melmoth.)

THE beauties of style are too often considered as below the attention both of the author and reader; but there was a time (and it was a period of the truest refinement) when an excellence of this kind was esteemed in the number of the politest accomplishments; as it was the ambition of some of the greatest names of antiquity, to distinguish themselves in the improvements of their native tongue.

Julius Cæsar, who was not only the greatest hero, but the finest gentleman that ever, perhaps, appeared in the world, was desirous of adding this talent to his other most shining endowments; and we are told that he studied the language of his country with much application; as we are sure he possessed it in the highest elegance. What

a loss is it to the literary world, that the treatise which he wrote upon this subject, is perished with many valuable works of that age! But though we are deprived of the benefit of his observations, we are happily not without an instance of their effects; and his own memoirs will ever remain as the brightest exemplar, not only of true generalship, but of fine writing. He published them, indeed, only as materials for the use of those who should be disposed to enlarge upon that remarkable period of the Roman story; yet the purity and gracefulness of his style were such, that no judicious writer durst attempt to touch the subject after him.

Having produced so illustrious an instance in favour of this art, it would be impertinent to add a second, were I to cite a less authority than that of the immortal Tully. This able author, in his dialogue concerning the celebrated Roman orators, frequently mentions it as a very high encomium, that they possessed the elegance of their native language; and introduces Brutus as declaring, that he would prefer the honour of being esteemed the great master and improver of Roman eloquence, even to the glory of many triumphs.

But to add reason to precedent, and to view this art in its use as well as its dignity; will it not

be of some importance, when it is considered that eloquence is one of the most considerable auxiliaries of truth? Nothing, indeed, contributes more to subdue the mind to the force of reason, than her being supported by the powerful assistance of masculine and vigorous oratory: as on the contrary the most legitimate arguments may be disappointed of their deserved success by spiritless and enfeebled expressions. Accordingly that most elegant of writers, the inimitable Mr. Addison, well observes in one of his essays; "there is as much difference between comprehending a thought clothed in Cicero's language and that of an ordinary writer, as between seeing an object by the light of a taper and the light of the sun."

It is, surely then, a strange conceit of the celebrated Malbranche, who seems to think that the pleasure which arises from a well written piece, is of the criminal kind, and has its source in the weakness and effeminacy of the human heart. A man must have a very uncommon severity of temper indeed, who can find any thing to condemn in adding charms to truth, and gaining the heart by captivating the ear; in uniting roses with the thorns of science, and joining pleasure with instruction.

The truth is, the mind is delighted with a fine

style upon the same principle that it prefers regularity to confusion, and beauty to deformity. A taste of this sort is indeed so far from being a mark of any depravity of our nature, that I should rather consider it as an evidence, in some degree, of the moral rectitude of its constitution ; as it is a proof of its retaining some relish at least of harmony and order.

We might be apt, indeed, to suspect that certain writers among us had considered all beauties of this sort, in the same gloomy view with Malbranche ; or at least that they avoided every refinement in style, as unworthy a lover of truth and philosophy. Their sentiments are sunk by the lowest expressions, and seem condemned to the first curse, of “ creeping upon the ground all “ the days of their life.” Others, on the contrary, mistake pomp for dignity ; and in order to raise their expressions above the vulgar language, lift them up beyond common apprehensions, esteeming it (one should imagine) a mark of their genius, that it requires some ingenuity to penetrate their meaning.

But how few writers know how to hit that true medium which lies between those distant extremes. How seldom do we meet with an author, whose expressions are glowing but not glaring ; whose metaphors are natural, but not

common; whose periods are harmonious, but not poetical; in a word whose sentiments are well set, and shewn to the understanding in their truest and most advantageous lustre.

ESSAY 100.

CONTENTMENT, A FABLE.

Nolint atqui licet esse beatis. Hor. lib. 1. Sat. 1.

(*Museum.*)

I AM much inclined to think that the misfortunes, as they are termed, of life, are not so often owing to the want of care, as being over solicitous to acquire what nature would effect for us, if we were contented to follow her dictates. The brutes, led on by that inward impulse we call instinct, never err in their pursuit after what is good for

them; but man, enlightened by reason, that particular mark of Providence which distinguishes him from the rest of beings, obstinately refuses to be conducted to happiness, and often travels towards misery with labour and fatigue.

It would be absurd to say, that a rational creature would voluntarily chuse misery; but we too frequently do it blindly. Every thing, as the philosophical emperor* observes, is fancy; but as that fancy is in our own power to govern, we are justly punished if we suffer it to wander at will, or to deceive us into uneasiness.

The most sure and speedy way to detect any mental imposture is by soliloquy or self examination, in the way laid down by our great restorer of ancient learning. If our fancy stands the test of this mirror, which represents all objects in their true colours, it is genuine, and may be accepted by the mind with safety; but if it recedes from the trial, or changes in the attempt, it is spurious, and ought to be rejected. This will inform us that the great mistake of mankind in the pursuit after happiness, is casting their looks at a distance after lands of Paradise, while the prospect so much sought after blooms unbelhield around them.

* Antoninus Pius.

At Ispahan in Persia, there lived a young man of noble family and great fortune, named Achmet, who from his infancy shewed the earliest signs of a restless and turbulent spirit; and though by nature endowed with an understanding superior to any of his age, was led away with every gust of passion to precipitate himself into the greatest dangers. After having experienced the misfortunes that accrue from such a disposition, he became somewhat more diffident of his own abilities, and determined to take the advice of those who had been most conversant with human nature how to proceed for the future.

There dwelt not far from the city, in a little cell among a ridge of mountains, an old hermit, who many years before had retired from the world to spend there the rest of his days in prayer and contemplation. This good man became so famous for his wisdom and exemplary life, that all who had any uneasiness of mind, consulted Abudah (for so he was called) and never failed receiving consolation, in the deepest affliction, from his prudent counsel, which made the superstitious imagine, that there was a charm in the sound of his words to drive away despair and all her gloomy attendants.

Hither Achmet repaired, and as he was enter-

ing a grove near the sage's habitation, met according to his wishes, the venerable recluse. He prostrated himself before him, and with signs of the utmost anguish, "Behold," said he, "Oh
"divine Abudah favourite of our mighty prophet, who resemblest Allah by distributing the
"balm of comfort to the distressed, behold the
"most miserable of mortals."

He was proceeding in this melancholy strain, when the old man, deeply affected with his lamentations, interrupted him, and taking him by the hand: "Rise my son," said he, "let me know
"the cause of thy misfortunes, and whatever is in
"my power shall be done to restore thee to tranquillity."

"Alas!" replied Achmet, "how can I be restored to that which I never yet possessed! for
"know, thou enlightened guide of the faithful,
"I never have spent an easy moment that I can
"remember, since reason first dawned upon my
"mind. Hitherto even from my cradle, a thousand
"fancies have attended me through life,
"and are continually, under the false appearances
"of happiness, deceiving me into anxiety,
"whilst others are enjoying the most undisturbed
"repose. Tell me, then, I conjure thee by
"the holy temple of Mecca, from whence thy

“ prayers have been so often carried to Mahomet
“ by the ministers of Paradise, by what method
“ I may arrive, if not at the sacred tranquillity
“ which thou enjoyest, yet at the harbour of
“ such earthly peace as the holy Koran has pro-
“ mised to all those who obey its celestial pre-
“ cepts; for sure the damned who remove alter-
“ nately from the different extremes of chilling
“ frosts and scorching flames cannot suffer greater
“ torments than I undergo at present.”

Abudab, perceiving that a discontented mind alone was the source of the young man's troubles, said to him, “ Be comforted my son, for thou
“ shalt receive the reward of a true believer, and
“ be freed from all thy misfortunes; but thou must
“ still undergo many more, before thou canst be
“ numbered with the truly happy. Thou inqui-
“ rest of me where happiness dwells. Look
“ round the world, and see in how many diffe-
“ rent scenes she has taken up her residence;
“ sometimes, though very rarely, in a palace, often
“ in a cottage; the philosopher's cave of retire-
“ ment, and the soldier's tent amid the noise and
“ dangers of war, are by turns her habitation;
“ the rich man may see her in his treasure, or the
“ beggar in his wallet. In all these situations she
“ is to be found, but in none altogether. Go,

“ then and seek thy fortune among the various
“ scenes of the world, and if thou shouldst prove
“ unsuccessful in this probationary expedition,
“ return to me, when seven years are expired,
“ when the passions of youth begin to subside,
“ and I will instruct thee by a religious emblem,
“ which our great prophet shewed me in a
“ dream, how to obtain the end of all thy
“ wishes.”

Achmet, not understanding Abudah's meaning, left him as discontented as he came, and returned to Ispahan with a full resolution of gratifying every inclination of pleasure or ambition, imagining that to be the road to discover felicity. Accordingly he gave up his first years entirely to those enjoyments, which enervate both mind and body; till finding at length no real satisfaction in the possession of these; but rather diseases and disappointments, he changed his course of life, and followed the dictates of avarice, that continually offered to his eyes, external happiness, seated on a throne of gold. His endeavours succeeded, and by the assistance of fortune he became the richest subject of the East.

Still something was wanting. Power and honour presented themselves to his view, and wholly engaged his attention. Those desires.

did not remain long unsatisfied, for by the favour of the Sophy he was advanced to the highest dignities of the Persian empire.

But alas, he was still no nearer the primary object of his most ardent wishes! Fears, doubts, and a thousand different anxieties that attend the great, perpetually haunted him, and made him seek again the calm retirement of rural life. Nor was the latter productive of any more comfort than the former stations. In short, being disappointed, and finding happiness in no one condition, he sought the hermit a second time, to complain of his fate, and claim the promise he had received before the beginning of his adventures.

Abudah seeing his disciple return again after the stated time, still discontented, took him by the hand, and smiling upon him with an air of gentle reproof, "Achmet," said he, "cease to blame thy fate for the uneasiness which arises alone from thy own breast; behold, since thou hast performed the task I enjoined in order to make thee more capable of following my future instructions, I will unfold to thee the grand mystery of wisdom; by which she leads her votaries to happiness. See," said he, pointing to a river in which several young swans

were eagerly swimming after their own shadows in the stream, " those silly birds imitate mankind, " they are in pursuit of that which their own motion puts to flight ; behold others that have " tired themselves with their unnecessary labours, " and sitting still are in possession of what their " utmost endeavours could never have accomplished. Thus, my son, happiness is the " shadow of contentment, and rests, or moves " for ever with its original."

ESSAY 101.

ON GAMING.

*A Letter from the Parson of the Parish, to Sir
Charles Easy, in London.*

DEAR SIR CHARLES,

You will forgive your old friend, who has troubled you now and then with wholesome advice, if he should do so once more, as now there seems to be particular occasion for it. You say in your last, that you are £.2,000 the poorer this year for play. I am sorry to hear it, with all my heart! for we country people look upon £.2,000 as a very serious matter; and had I not known you so well, I should have been much surprised to find that you can write so gaily on losing so large a sum.

I know that you gentlemen of the town look upon gaming only as an idle and weak thing at the worst, but I have long considered it as one

of the greatest sins: You will forgive an old parson for using a word, which they tell us is almost grown out of fashion.

Will you give me leave to tell you why I consider gaming as so very wicked? It is because it may make a very bad man of a very good one.

I know your temper very well; and I am sure, that naturally you were much inclined to do good, and very desirous of having a good name in the world. You were from your earliest infancy of a sweet disposition; and, I have seen you, when a boy, give sixpence to a poor old woman, when you had not twopence left in your pocket. How then can you continue to be so fond of a vice that may in time render you unwise, inglorious, sunk in reputation, unmerciful, and unjust?

I know you will laugh and say I am preaching to you. Well, that, you know, is my trade; and I hope I shall never be ashamed of it. But how does play do all these bad things? Why if you please I will tell you; and that in a few words too, though I am so old a man.

The manners of all are tinged with the company which they keep. Now, the lower sort of gamblers are weak men, if you take them out of their cards and dice; and those who game much, must frequently be reduced to their company, and consequently cannot derive the smallest

improvement from their conversation. As for reputation, the character of a gamester is generally allowed to be of the worst kind ; and though the world is so bad, yet none have ever been esteemed for being gamesters ; unless things are grown worse since I was in London, which was at the last convocation.

I beg you to recollect ; for I know your good disposition, and how often you have been willing to relieve some worthy object in distress, and could not, because the dice had a run against you the night or two before. In each of these instances the dice made you not generous, where you wished much to exert your generosity.

Whenever an income is lessened by play, the tenants in the country must be pressed to pay their rents : the rents must also be racked up as high as possible, to supply the annual demands of the gaming table ; and both of those, I fear, often in a manner that may be termed unmerciful.

Whenever gaming swallows great part of an income, as gaming debts must be paid first, most other debts are neglected. Now the true value of trade consists in circulation ; and if tradesmen's debts remain long unpaid, there must be injustice somewhere. Either they charge no

more than to a speedy payer, and then you are unjust to them in so long detaining their money; or they will charge you more than the proper value of their goods, and then you are the occasion of injustice to yourself.

So that what I said was true, that gaming will render you unwise, sunk in reputation, ungenerous, unmerciful, and unjust. But the point, I own, which grieves me most is, that so excellent a turn of mind as yours, should be rendered of no effect, by such pitiful means.

I have just been computing how much good you might have done during the last year; all which you have omitted without adding to your character and happiness. I will put down the calculation.

An account of what might have been done by Sir Charles Easy for the benefit and happiness of mankind in 1743.

	£.	s.	d.
Towards apprenticing the two sons of a soldier who fought bravely and lost his life in the battle of Dettingen	40	0	0
To a poor clergyman, who bred up a large family with only £.15 a year	105	0	0
To portions for five young women of good character on their marriages with honest tradesmen	100	0	0
To clothing and schooling ten boys	100	0	0
Carried over	345	0	0

GAMING.

285

	£.	s.	d.
Brought over	345	0	0
Towards apprenticing fourteen boys and six girls	200	0	0
Towards setting up four young men just out of their time, in their trades	150	0	0
Loan to poor tradesmen without interest for three years	200	0	0
To the children of officers left in great distress	250	0	0
To a gentleman of birth and merit, reduced to extremity	300	0	0
To a lady whose father being a gamester left her without any fortune	300	0	0
Occasional charities.....	255	0	0
Total....	2,000	0	0

Instead of this in your present account all stands under one article.

For 1743.

Lost in gaming £.2,000 0 0

Ah ! Sir Charles, let me entreat you to compare these two very different accounts, and weigh the one against the other. Had you had the happiness to have followed the former, you would have derived great pleasure every time you looked it over, to reflect that you had contributed so much in *one year*, towards making so

many worthy and distressed persons happy for their *whole lives*. What have you instead but the mortification——

I will say no more, but leave you to fill up the sentence yourself.

Think of it a little, if it be possible for you to sit down to think, good Sir Charles. I have always loved you as if you were my own son. You gave me my living, and have ever been good to me; and I could chearfully resign it to hear the world speak well of you as they do in most things. When I hear any thing good of you, it is the comfort of my grey hairs; and when I hear any thing ill, I feel it here at my heart. If you should happen to send me word this time twelvemonth that you had disposed of only half the overplus of your income in acts of charity, instead of sacrificing it all in this wretched way, I verily believe it would comfort me so much, that it might add two or three years to the declining life of,

Dear Sir Charles,

Yours, &c.

ESSAY 102.

ON STOLEN MARRIAGES.

(Goldsmith.)

AS I see you are fond of gallantry, and seem willing to set young people together as soon as you can, I cannot help lending my assistance to your endeavours, as I am greatly concerned in the attempt. You must know, sir, that I am landlady of one of the most noted inns on the road to Scotland, and have seldom less than eight or ten couples a week who go down rapturous lovers and return man and wife.

If there be an agreeable situation, it must be that in which a young couple find themselves, when just let loose from confinement, and whirling to the land of promise. When the post-chaise is driving off, and the blinds are drawn up, sure nothing can equal it. And yet I do not know how, what with the fears of being pursued, or the wishes for greater happiness, not one of my

customers but seems gloomy and out of temper. The gentlemen are all sullen, and the ladies discontented.

But if it be so going down, how is it with them coming back? Having been a fortnight together, they are then mighty good company to be sure. It is then the young lady's indiscretion stares her in the face, and the gentleman himself finds that much is to be done before the money comes in.

For my own part, sir, I was married in the usual way; all my friends were at the wedding. I was conducted with great ceremony from the table to the bed; and I do not find that it any ways diminished my happiness with my husband, while, poor man, he continued with me. For my part I am entirely for doing things in the old family way; I hate your new fashioned manners, and never loved an outlandish marriage in my life.

As I have had numbers call at my house, you may be sure I was not idle in enquiring who they were, and how they did in the world after they left me. I cannot say, that I ever heard much good came of them; and of a history of twenty five, that I noted down in my ledger, I do not know a single couple that would not have been full as happy if they had gone the

plain way to work, and asked the consent of their parents. To convince you of it, I will mention the names of a few, and refer the rest to some fitter opportunity.

Imprimis, Miss Jenny Hastings went down to Scotland with a tailor, who to be sure for a tailor was a very agreeable sort of a man. But I do not know how, he did not take proper measure of the young lady's disposition; they quarrelled at my house on their return, so she left him for a cornet of dragoons, and he went back to his shopboard.

Miss Rachel Runfort went off with a grenadier; they spent all their money going down; so that he carried her down in a post-chaise, and coming back she helped him to carry his knapsack.

Miss Racket went down with her lover in their own phaeton, but upon their return being very fond of driving, she would be every now and then for holding the whip. This bred a dispute, and before they were a fortnight together, she felt that he could exercise the whip on somebody else besides the horses.

Miss Meekly, though all compliance to the will of her lover, could never reconcile him to the change of his situation. It seems he married her, supposing she had a large fortune; but

being deceived in their expectations they parted, and they now keep separate garrets in Rosemary lane.

The next couple of whom I have any account actually lived together in great harmony and uncloying kindness for no less than a month; but the lady, who was a little in years, having parted with her fortune to her dearest life, he left her to make love to that better part of her which he valued more.

The next pair consisted of an Irish fortune hunter, and one of the prettiest modestest ladies that ever my eyes beheld. As he was a well-looking gentleman dressed in lace, and as she was very fond of him, I thought they were blessed for life. Yet I was quickly mistaken. The lady was no better than a common woman of the town, and he was no better than a sharper, so they agreed upon a divorce; he now dresses at the York ball, and she is in keeping by the member for our borough in parliament.

In this manner we see that all those marriages in which there is interest on one side, and disobedience on the other, are not likely to promise a long harvest of delights. If our fortune-hunting gentlemen would but speak out, the young lady, instead of a lover, would often find a sneaking rogue, that only wanted the lady's purse, and not

her heart. For my part, I never saw any thing but design and falsehood in every one of them; and my blood has boiled in my veins, when I saw a young fellow of twenty kneeling at the feet of a twenty thousand pounder, professing his passion, while he was taking aim at her money. I do not deny but there may be love in a Scotch marriage, but it is generally all on one side.

Of all the sincere admirers I ever knew, a man of my acquaintance, who, however, did not run away with his mistress to Scotland, was the most so. An old exciseman of our town, who, as you may guess, was not very rich, had a daughter, who, as you shall see, was not very handsome. It was the opinion of every body that this young woman would not soon be married, as she wanted two main articles, beauty and fortune.

But for all this, a very well-looking man, that happened to be travelling in those parts, came and asked the exciseman for his daughter in marriage. The exciseman, willing to deal openly by him, asked if he had seen the girl; for, says he, she is hump-backed. "Very well," cried the stranger, "that will do for me." "Aye," says the exciseman, "but my daughter is as 'brown as a berry.'" "So much the better," says the traveller, "such skins wear well."

"But she is bandy-legged," says the exciseman.
"No matter," cries the other, "her petticoats
will hide that defect." "But, then, she is
very poor, and wants an eye." "Your de-
scription delights me," cries the stranger, "I
have been looking out for one of her make;
for I keep an exhibition of wild beasts, and
intend to show her off for a Chimpanzee."

ESSAY 103.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL WATCH.

(German Spy.)

A MAN may be said to live up to the highest perfection of his species, if he has attained to a true knowledge of his duty to the Supreme Being, to himself, and to his fellow creatures, and governs his actions according to the dictates of that knowledge. This may be properly called the rational or philosophical life of man; the length of which my watch has the singular virtue of measuring with the greatest accuracy. It exactly shews how long a person may be said to have lived according to the most perfect acceptation of the word. Whatever the common opinion of the world may be, we cannot properly be said to live the time we spend in dressing, gaming, dancing, prattling, laughing, and the like. We live no longer than while we act according to the dictates of solid reason and sound understanding. At least in this sense it is that my watch shows

how long a man has really lived, with regard only to such perfections as are not common to the vegetable or animal life.

To outer appearance this watch differs from a common pocket watch only in the dial plate and the motions of the hands. The circle which in common watches shews the minutes, is here divided into three hundred and sixty degrees; thirty of which make a philosophical month, and each single division a philosophical day, which is something longer than a natural day, of which three hundred and sixty-five make the year. The inner circle is divided into twenty-four hours, with their subdivisions as in the common watches; but the motions of the hands are just the reverse. The hour hand moves round its whole circle, while that which is called the minute hand in other watches is moving the three hundred and sixtieth part of its circumference; and both move backwards or forwards as circumstances require.

The use of this watch is extremely easy. Whenever I desired to know the philosophical life of any person, I need only hold it within the reach of the effluvia from his body, keeping my finger upon a certain spring which prevents those proceeding from the person who holds it from producing any effect. If he has spent his whole

life in folly, indolence, and a continual neglect of his rational duty, it stands still; but if he has mis-spent any part of it in actions unbecoming a rational creature, the watch shews it, by running as many days, months, and years backwards. Has his life been a medley of good, bad, and indifferent, as most mens are, it shews the balance.

To enter into a discussion of the inward construction of this watch, and the causes which produce these wonderful effects, is foreign to my present purpose, and indeed in a great measure beyond my comprehension. I shall therefore give you an account of some observations and experiments I have made with it.

1. I observe that my watch stands still, not only the whole time that a man has spent in idleness and indolence, which is generally the greater part of his natural life; but all the time he has employed in eating, drinking, sleeping, and whatever may be reckoned in the vegetable or animal, a hindrance to our moral life.

2. As soon as it approaches a man who is engaged in some public spirited generous action, for the good of mankind, it moves forward several days at once, and on the contrary, if any one is about to commit a remarkable act of injustice, it flies backwards with such rapidity as to endanger its safety.

3. With regard to the sexes, I have observed that in the company of men, it is very apt to run backwards, and in that of the fair sex to stand still, though in honour to the latter, I have sometimes observed it to run with greater swiftness forwards, than is usual with regard to the other sex.

4. In our present depraved times, I have observed, that whenever the longest hand of my watch makes seven turns round its circumference of three hundred and sixty degrees, the person who sets it in motion may be reckoned in a very advanced age; and he who attains his sixth philosophical year may be called an old man.

5. I have indeed a list of some persons, who at the natural age of twenty or thirty years have, according to my watch, died in a good old age, but such examples are very rare.

6. With the help of my watch, I have been enabled to write the whole life and history of my late neighbour Dick Nightcap in these few words. Richard Nightcap, born anno 1697, died anno 1727, aged 0 year.

7. Harry Spadille, a gamester of sixty years natural age, is according to my watch fourteen days and six hours old. At that age he made a halt in life, and let one of his grand-children grow seven months older than himself.

8. Nick Miser, an old usurer, died according to my watch some years before he was born. The many acts of injustice which he had been guilty of produced such an effect, as I cannot better describe than by employing the algebraic term and character minus by the help of which I can say he lived -5 years $+ 3$ months $+ 10$ days $+ \frac{1}{4}$ hour, and so much in his account of philosophical life, he was worse than nothing at his death.

In fact they may be accounted long and good livers, to whom we can with justice apply the epitaph which a Roman Consul in the time of the emperor Trajan caused to be placed on his tomb,

Hic jacet Similis
Cujus ætas multorum annorum fuit,
Ipse septem duntaxat annos vixit.

Here lies Similis
Who was many years old
But lived only seven years.

To form a just and profitable application of these reflections, let a young and healthy person, advanced to the years of discretion, make a supposition of the time he may reasonably think he has to live. If the life of man be reckoned at a medium thirty years; let us for

argument's sake suppose twelve years, of these twelve we must abate at least four, for the necessary time of sleeping, dressing and the like. Two years we may reckon for eating and drinking; and that person must be very assiduous indeed who does not spend two more in pleasure and diversions. We have then four left for the rational and beneficial occupations of a philosophical life. No small part of it is probably spent in indifference and indolence; and he must be a very exact observer of his duty, who has not some of it to balance against time spent in irrational and unwarrantable actions. So that on the whole we have hardly more than two in twelve.

ESSAY 104.

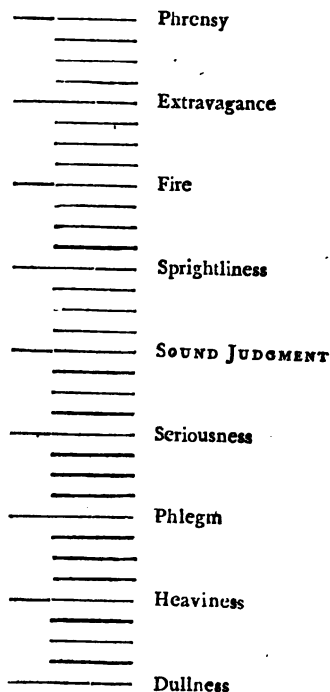
THE INTELLECTUAL THERMOMETER.

(German Spy.)

THIS little thermometer may very properly be called the touch-stone of sound reason, a metal which in these latter times we find very much debased, and without the help of such a touch-stone not easily valued. But the author has dignified it with the significant name of the Intellectual Thermometer, or weather-glass of the understanding, which is the meaning of the Arabic characters inlaid in the niche over the tube ; and his reason evidently was, because it displays the different degrees of the heat or cold of the understanding with the utmost accuracy. The characters denoting these degrees, each subdivided into four quarters, stood in the following order :

D D 2

INTELLECTUAL THERMOMETER.



Whenever I read an author of a judicious, clear, and unaffected genius, I always observe that the spirits in my tube remain fixed to the center or sound judgment. When this sound and natural judgment is brightened with a lively imagination, my thermometer has risen to



sprightliness. One degree more of vivacity and spirit raises it to fire, a very valuable property of the mind if kept in a settled continuity. A little too much fire produces wildness or extravagance, and from this there is but one step more to madness, raving, or phrensy.

In the lower divisions of my thermometer the several degrees of cold in the understanding are justly distinguished in their orderly decrease. A good sound natural judgment, tempered with a little cold, falls into seriousness. Seriousness is the forerunner of phlegm; too much phlegm cramps the understanding and makes it heavy; and a heavy writer is in as ready a way to become dull, as a wild or extravagant one is to commence madman.

As I have had frequent opportunities of using this instrument in the examination of the works of the learned, and to determine to the twelfth part of an inch, what measure of understanding and spirit which any particular author possesses, I shall only in general remark that in mathematics and history, the spirits in my tube remain fixed to the center. Rhetoric raises them to sprightliness; and philosophy sinks them to seriousness. The antient poets raise them to fire, but law or the fathers depress them to phlegm. The most renowned romances have elevated

them to wildness or extravagance, and I am sorry to say, it is but too common for our modern authors to bring them down, at least one degree below phlegm.

But above all, I have most wondered at the strange effect which the greater part, of controversial writings have produced. I no sooner begin to read a line or two of them than my spirits rise at once from the ball to the highest degree of my tube, and fall again with the like precipitancy to the lowest.

As it is of a portable size, I have caused a case to be made to it, and seldom go into company without taking my thermometer with me ; and while others are busied in admiring the structure of it, and narrowly examining the characters of the degrees, which are intelligible only to myself, I have an opportunity of enquiring into the capacities and faculties of their minds.

In assemblies, made up partly of the fair sex, I generally observe my thermometer to rise at least above sprightliness : and in those which consist wholly of men, it rises in proportion as the bottles empty ; but when I have visited the same friends the next morning, at their tea table, I generally find it sunk two degrees lower than it was before it began to rise the preceding evening.

With the account of this Intellectual Thermometer we close our selection; and we trust that the literary contributions, which we have levied from our different writers, will stand the test, and that they will be found to preserve a due medium, neither causing it to sink below phlegm nor to rise above fire.



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